Huskers Illustrated

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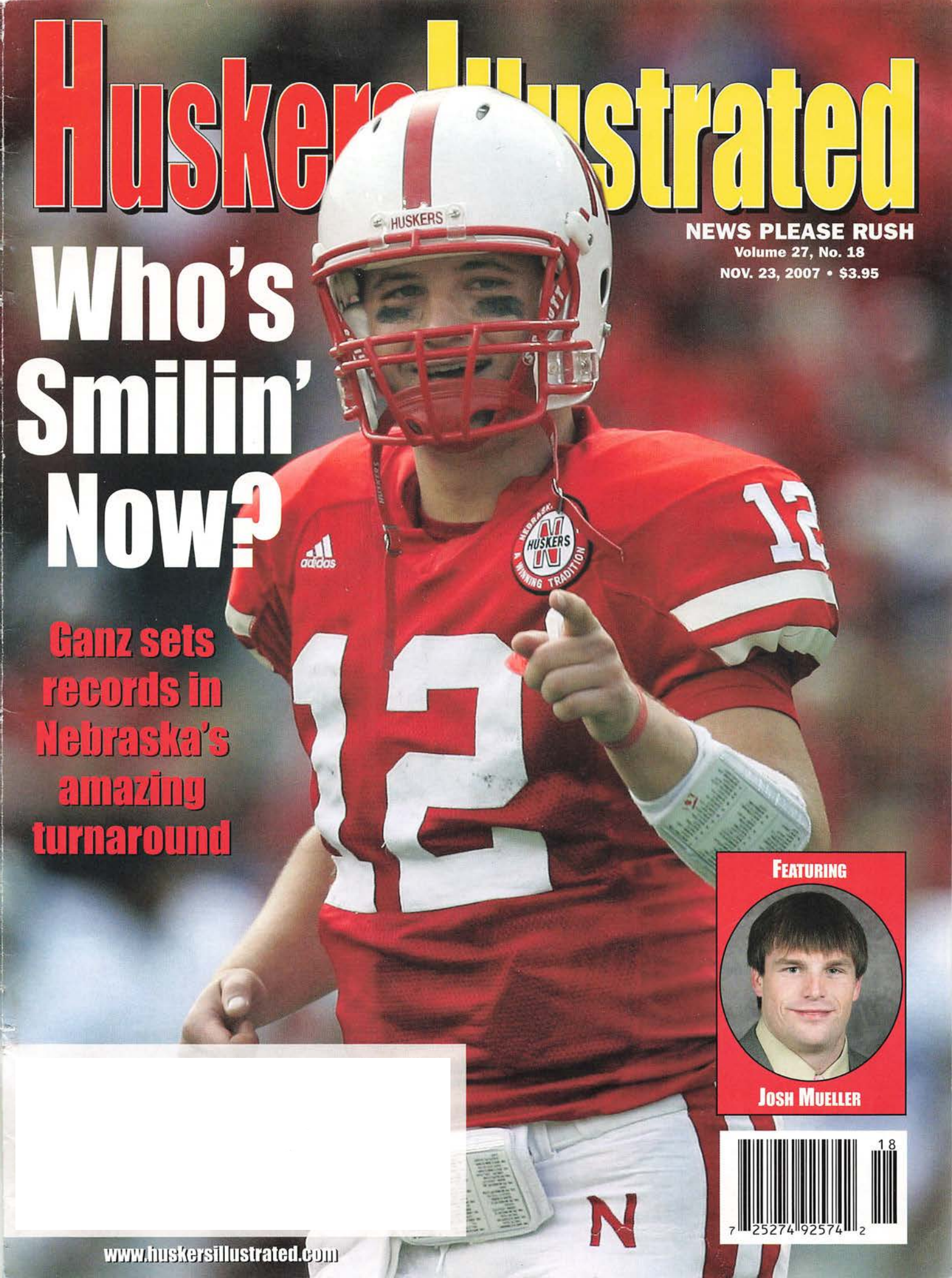
Who's Smilin' Now?

Ganz sets records in Nebraska's amazing turnaround



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FROM THE EDITOR

Tremendous Turnaround

Huskers finally stop the bleeding in resounding fashion

Brian HILL

THE NEBRASKA football team's chances of outscoring the NU basketball team on this day appeared to be about as good as their chances of making it to a bowl game.

The way things had been going, if someone had told you the football team outscored the basketball team, you might have asked, "Did they win?"

A week after surrendering 11 touchdowns in an embarrassing 76-39 loss at Kansas, the struggling Huskers amazingly found a way to do a complete reversal, racking up 10 touchdowns and a field goal in 11 possessions to devour Kansas State 73-31.

About four hours later, Doc Sadler's NU basketball team opened the regular season with a 67-52 victory over Presbyterian. College of Clinton, S.C.

Nebraska fans, no doubt, still were thinking about that wacky football game and the fact that the Huskers were right back in the bowl picture, needing a win at Colorado Nov. 23 to become bowl-eligible.

Illogical . . . improbable . . . inexplicable . . . unbelievable. Take your pick. Embattled coach Bill Callahan tried his best to describe it during his postgame news conference.

"Sometimes in this game, it gets a little crazy," Callahan said. "It can go either way, so we've been on both sides of the spectrum now. Anything can happen on any given Saturday, that's for certain."

It didn't start out quite so promising. Nebraska went three-and-out on its first possession, and K-State took a 7-0 lead.

But the Huskers would answer in resounding fashion just 13 seconds later, when senior cornerback Cortney Grixby brought the crowd to its feet with a 94-yard kickoff return. It was NU's first kickoff return for a touchdown since Joe Walker returned a kickoff 99 yards for a touchdown in the 1998 season opener against Louisiana Tech.

The Wildcats would take a 10-7 lead, before the Huskers incredibly scored 45 straight points.

You can read more about Nebraska's tremendous turnaround in this edition of Huskers Illustrated. Tight end Josh Mueller, one of 29 seniors honored before their final home appearance, is the subject of this week's feature story, and backup quarterback Beau Davis answers "10 Questions."

It was nice to see Davis, a rarely used junior, get an opportunity to lead the final scoring drive, on which he completed his only pass. Most fans' memories of Davis come from his inauspicious debut in relief of Joe Dailey in the 70-10 loss to Texas Tech in 2004.

A little over three years later, the Huskers were on the positive side of one of those big numbers, led by a career day from junior quarterback Joe Ganz. Making just his second start, Ganz put up some gaudy numbers, completing 30-of-40 passes, good for school records of 510 yards and seven touchdowns.

"I'm more proud of not turning the ball over, really, than (breaking) those two records," Ganz said afterward. "Obviously, those two records are a great accomplishment with the rich tradition here, but I'm happy I didn't turn the ball over and that we got the win."

And what a win it was. ■

ON THE COVER

Junior quarterback Joe Ganz is all smiles after throwing his sixth touchdown pass to break the NU single-game record. He would finish with seven scoring passes in NU's 73-31 victory over Kansas State. *Cover photo by Scott Bruhn.*

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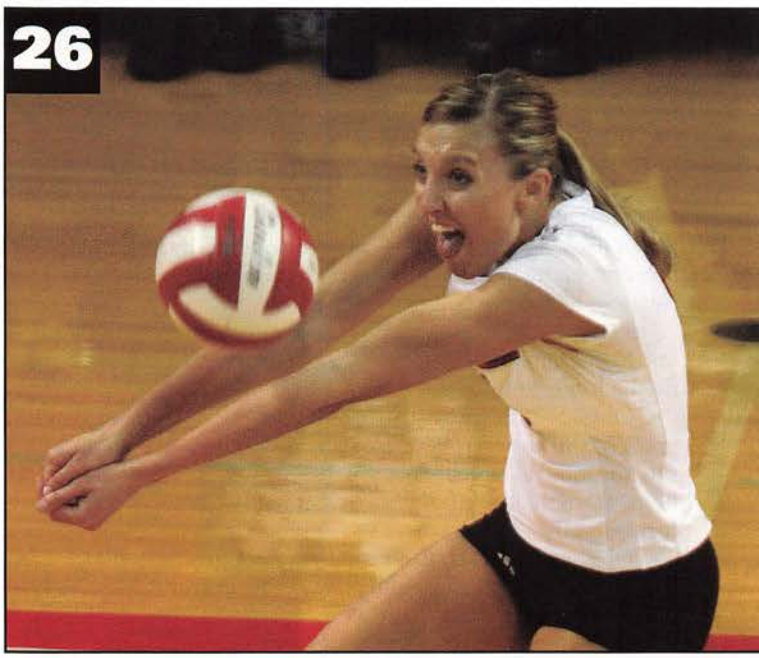


8 FEATURING JOSH MUELLER

When Josh Mueller made his recruiting visit to Nebraska, Schulte Fieldhouse wasn't included on the tour of facilities. He would learn about it soon enough, as every freshman football player did. *By Mike Babcock*

NEXT ISSUE

The Colorado review edition will be mailed the week of Nov. 26. Check for updates at huskersillustrated.com.

Not Much Change

Even after discouraging defeats, most of Nebraska's players have remained intensely loyal to their coaches

Terry DOUGLASS

WHILE NEBRASKA FOOTBALL FANS have endured a surprisingly disappointing season, it's difficult to dispute that Tom Osborne's return as interim athletics director has added a bounce to the collective step of Husker Nation.

Even in what has suddenly become trying times for Big Red football fans, it seems that having Osborne back in the fold brings them a sense of hope for the future. That was evident even following the Cornhuskers' record-setting 76-39 loss at Kansas, when one of the Nebraska faithful hollered, "Thanks for coming back, Tom," as the Hall of Fame coach stood near the entrance of the team's locker room.

Osborne acknowledged the gentleman with a polite wave, but it was no stretch to surmise that Osborne was lost in his thoughts as he pondered exactly what it's going to take to get the football program turned around. Yes, not even Osborne — a man with 255 career coaching victories, 13 conference titles and three national championships — can fix what ails the Cornhuskers with a mere snap of his fingers. Osborne, himself, has said as much.

The reintroduction of Osborne into Nebraska's football program appears to be the polar opposite to the "flipping of the culture" project that former Nebraska AD Steve Pederson and head football coach Bill Callahan have championed since the start of the 2004 season. However, it's easy to understand how Osborne's return could also be causing some mixed feelings in the Huskers' locker room.

After all, just 52 of the 133 players listed on the Nebraska roster hail from the Cornhusker state. That translates to less than 40 percent of the team's players who were brought up learning the ins and outs of Big Red tradition and what Osborne has meant to the state and the football program.

Now that Osborne is on the scene, most college football analysts will say that the days are numbered for the current coaching staff. But while many fans may have maybe had their fill of Callahan, defensive coordinator Kevin Cosgrove and this coaching staff, those are the same individuals who brought many of these players to the program, and many close relationships have been developed.

Even after discouraging defeats, most of Nebraska's players have remained intensely loyal to their coaches during media interviews — always an admirable trait.

"Outside the program, obviously everything's looking great for all the fans because Coach Osborne's back, and he's the interim AD," Nebraska defensive end Zach Potter said. "It helps from that point of view, but it really doesn't do anything for us, really.

"Obviously, Coach Osborne is a great guy, and he's talked to us quite a few times, and that helps, but on the field, he's not coaching anymore."

While many folks who've grown up in Nebraska and watched Osborne string together 25 consecutive seasons that always included bowl games and nine wins or more, there are many current Husker players who really aren't that familiar with Osborne's legacy.

"I think it's just more of a fan-media thing," senior tackle Carl Nicks said when asked about Osborne's immediate impact on the football program. "We've still got the same coaches and we're doing the same thing every day, so it's not that big of a difference to most of us as players."

Before anyone starts drafting hate mail or making disparaging comments toward Nicks or makes charges of blasphemy, consider first that Nicks is from Salinas, Calif. He was just 14-years-old when Osborne was leading Nebraska to its last national title in 1997 and, at the time, probably didn't really even care about the Huskers — certainly no crime for a youngster growing up on the West Coast. Nicks' comments probably weren't so much irreverent as a product of the fact that he grew up in a very different place than most Nebraskans.

Zach Potter says it's "neat" to have Tom Osborne back.

Junior wide receiver Nate Swift, a Minnesota native, is another good example of how many of the Huskers feel about Osborne's arrival on the scene.

"I really didn't follow Nebraska before I came, but obviously I know about Coach Osborne," Swift said. "I think when he's in the room, there is definitely a presence there with him.

"Having him back, I don't think it makes us play better or makes us coach any different or anything like that, but I think it's nice having him here."

Potter, who is from Omaha, said he can definitely see both sides of the issue.

"I love having him back," Potter said of Osborne. "He talked to us right after he became interim AD, and that was the first time I've ever heard him really talk, so I got goose bumps during that. He came out to practice a couple times, and I was like, 'Wow, Coach Osborne's over there. That's neat.'

"I'm not going to lie. I tried harder when he was out there because he's Coach Osborne."

So T.O. can still motivate?

"All he's got to do is walk in a room," Potter said.

But what Potter said most people probably fail to realize is how close Nebraska's current players are with their current coaches. With that in mind, Osborne's emergence might have been more threatening than energizing to some players. It's only human nature.

"These coaches are around us more than their kids and we're around them, obviously, more than our families because a lot of us aren't from Lincoln," Potter said. "We look at them as father figures as well as coaches, so it's hard to see all the rumors going on about various coaches getting fired. It's very hard." ■

Terry Douglass *is the sports editor of the Grand Island (Neb.) Independent. He can be reached at terry.douglass@msn.com.*

Starting To Learn

Feel-good vibes coming back, but Hawkins reminds his new fans that the Buffs still have a long way to go

Curt McKEEVER

LISTENING TO DAN HAWKINS talk about his second season as Colorado's football coach, you'd think he just stepped off a roller coaster.

. . . And was racing to get in line for the next ride around the track.

In his amusement park world, Hawkins still is experiencing that nervous pit in his stomach as his "car" makes its tortoise-like, clickety-clack ascent to the top. But in the moments before it comes around the curve leading to the first big drop, he still feels free enough to trust his safety bar and raise his hands in the air.

Considering what Hawkins went through during his first year in Boulder — a 2-10 season — he'll gladly take the thrill of an up-and-down, twisting trek.

Ten games into 2007, the Buffs stood 5-5. That record included, in the middle of a three-game winning streak, a 27-24 upset of No. 3 Oklahoma on Sept. 29, and a 55-10 loss to No. 9 Missouri, which represented the third-most lopsided home setback in school history.

"It's part of the process," Hawkins said after the loss to the Tigers. "It's not always going to be Oklahoma, and it's not always going to be Missouri. The question is whether we can get our guys to put it in the right context. Can we make sure our guys take the pain and manifest it into future success?"

In other words, can they handle the downs as well as the ups?

In their first six Big 12 games, the Buffs went from giving up a combined 47 points in wins against the Sooners and Baylor to allowing 47 points in a loss at Kansas State. After losing a defensive battle to Kansas, they came back to win at Texas Tech.

CU then carried a 10-7 lead into the second quarter against Missouri before being stunned by a 24-point outburst before halftime.

Colorado also had led Kansas in the third quarter, and in an earlier loss at Arizona State was in front in the second quarter.

Those three opponents entered the second Saturday of November all ranked in the top 10, and with a combined record of 25-2.

Since Hawkins has parachuted, I doubt anything he's experienced this season has been as breathtaking. But he's definitely added to his collection of memories.

And he makes sure to share those with fans of the black and gold.

Hawkins does weekly blogs on CUBuffs.com. His topics range from suggested books to movies to music to what's cookin' on the home front. He's also pretty open when it comes to talking about his team and how the lessons learned on the field relate to life.

After the win at Oklahoma, he wrote: "A successful organization or leader must be committed to the process of improvement. Avoid having a parade when something goes well or a funeral if you hit some potholes along the way.

"I knew we would win on Saturday. Why? Our guys had a body of work that they could draw from. Their experiences had given them what they needed to form the proper frame of mind. All that was needed was for us to go out and sing our song and do our dance! Dance we did."

The tone was expectedly different after the loss to Missouri, but not as much as you might think:

"Ouch . . . again! To all the Buff faithful, I am sorry for the outcome. Coach (Gary) Pinkel took me to the woodshed in a big way; it's hard to remember, but that may be the largest loss I have been a part of. Football, as in life, will always have a way of humbling you the longer you throw yourself into the fire.

". . . Change requires growth, growth can sometimes be painful. The highest highs and the lowest lows are easily avoided if we are content to hang in the safe zone. . . . Keep the faith — the Buffs are still comin'!"

Hawkins ends his blogs with a simple sign-off: "Peace."

Dan Hawkins is in his second season at Colorado.

It would seem that a man who went 53-11 in five seasons at Boise State is well on his way to achieving that state of mind in Boulder. Far enough along, at least, that it'd be hard to guess that it was only last season the Buffaloes lost home games to the likes of Montana State and Baylor.

Apparently, CU's progress — which at that point included a 42-0 trashing of Miami of Ohio and the win against Oklahoma — had gone unnoticed by Baylor linebacker Joe Pawelek. He had commented before the teams' Oct. 6 game how the Bears had beat the Buffs up on their home field, and so they felt they had the upper hand.

Naturally, senior offensive lineman Tyler Polumbus was eager to hand deliver Pawelek a copy of that article after Colorado beat the Bears 43-23 in Waco, Texas, avenging the triple-overtime loss from 2006.

"They've always been an athletic team," Baylor coach Guy Morriss said after this year's meeting. "They just seem to be more confident, sure of themselves and playing a little more aggressively — not as tentative as I thought we saw some of last year, as you expect with a new coaching staff, new system and so forth."

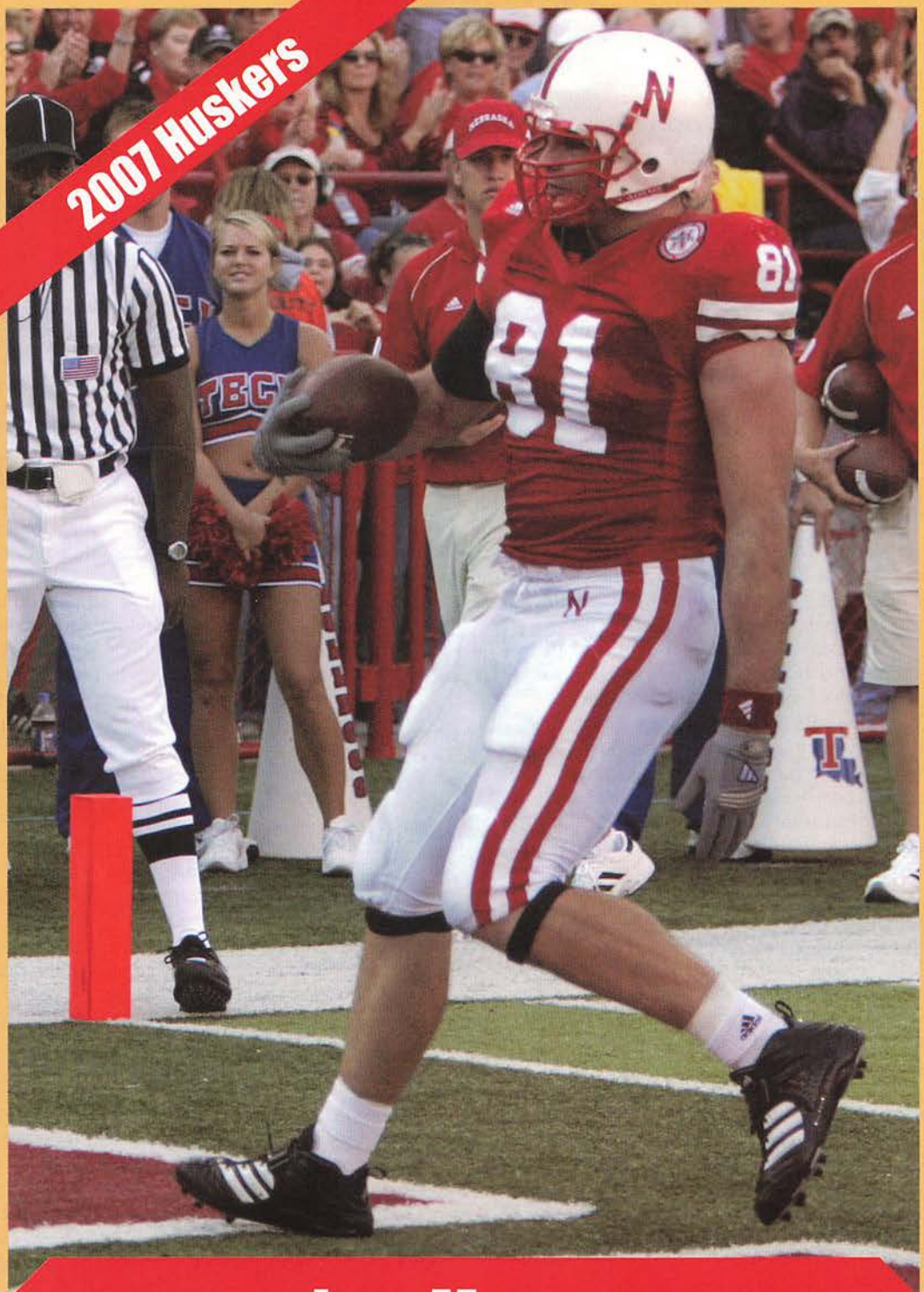
As the feel-good vibes are coming back at Hawkins and his team, the 46-year-old coach reminds his new fans that the Buffs have a long way to go before they have figured everything out.

But at least they're starting to learn.

Their track has rises after the falls.

"We're always searching for that perfect tapestry," Hawkins said after the Baylor win. "But, trust me, there are a lot of teams today that had ugly losses. The fact that you come on the road and haven't won on the road (in your last seven tries), score 43 and win by 20 and you're going, 'Dang.' That's probably a good sign." ■

Curt McKeever *is a sportswriter for the Lincoln Journal Star. In addition to reporting on football, he is the primary beat writer for baseball. Curt can be reached at cmckeever@journalstar.com*



Josh Mueller

Tight End

'It Does Seem Like It Was A Long Time Ago'

Featuring Josh Mueller

By Mike Babcock ● Photos: Scott Bruhn

When Josh Mueller made his recruiting visit to Nebraska, Schulte Fieldhouse wasn't included on the tour of facilities. He would learn about it soon enough, as every freshman football player did.

Recruits were shown the varsity locker room on the lower level of the South Stadium, where it had been since 1973, when Tom Osborne succeeded Bob Devaney as head coach.

It was relatively spacious, with red carpet wall to wall and red lockers. It could make a good impression on recruits. But Schulte Fieldhouse? No way anyone needed to see that.

The building's double-door entrance, beneath the words "FIELD HOUSE" flanked by N's, was hidden beneath Memorial Stadium's north stands. In this case hidden was good.

The varsity locker room had been in the field house. The brick and concrete structure, named for former Cornhusker football and track coach Henry "Pa" Schulte, was completed in 1946. Construction had begun in 1941, but World War II had intervened, delaying completion.

After varsity players moved to the south end, and the lucky horseshoe everyone tapped was relocated to the south end, Schulte Fieldhouse was turned over to freshmen, redshirts and the handful of older players who had yet to earn their way off the scout team. Some lockered there for more than two years.

Actually, there were two sets of doors and immediately beyond the second set was the large open window into the equipment room and laundry. Assistant equipment manager Mike Mason distributed towels and clean practice gear at the window. The locker area was to the right after entering.

There was a lounge, of sorts, with old couches and a small television set atop a pop machine that rarely worked. Players often pulled the cushions off the couches, onto the floor so they could stretch out and nap after class, before getting ready for practice. The lockers were farther back.

A single bench stretched through the canyon of lockers. Players learned to take their time in the cramped quarters, sharing the limited space on the bench between them. If a player on one side sat down to pull on and tie his cleats, the player on the other side would have to wait his turn.

The bathroom area was wide-open, no privacy. And it "reeked," Mueller said. The shower area wasn't any better. Attempts to paint the walls had failed. "There were (paint) globs everywhere."

Bars of soap would end up on the floor in the shower area. The spray would soften them, and players would pick them up and throw them against the wall, where they would stick and remain.

"It was a hole," said Mueller. "But it was ours."

The senior tight end considered his freshman season.

"I'd go back in a heartbeat, with all those guys," he said.

Not that Mueller hated to see Schulte Fieldhouse torn down in the summer of 2004, following his freshman year. "We were way too excited for that thing to go," he said.

He was referring to the shared experience, the relationships forged in Schulte Fieldhouse not the building itself. "Nobody ever came over there, so we kind of did what we wanted," he said. "We hung out there. All of us freshmen were together. You get to know your class. We had a good time in there.

"Nobody came in to mess with you."

☆ ☆ ☆

Mueller was a member of Frank Solich's final recruiting class. He was the second in the class to commit. Bo Ruud was the first, announcing he would sign a letter of intent in June of 2001. That was the earliest oral commitment Nebraska had ever received. Mueller's came soon after.

Mueller played football and basketball at Lakeview High in Columbus, Neb. And he excelled in both. He

earned three letters in basketball. His sophomore season, Lakeview was the Class C-1 state champion. And his junior season, it was the C-1 state runner-up. He couldn't play as a senior, however, because he was recovering from shoulder surgery to repair an injury suffered in the first football game.

He never considered playing basketball beyond high school because "there aren't too many 6-foot-6 post players in college basketball these days," he said. "There are 6-6 point guards, but I can't play point guard. They said, 'You're a good athlete, but you're a little more suited to football.' "

Mueller played offense, mostly, in high school. He was a tight end as a sophomore and a running back as a junior, rushing for 851 yards. He knew his college football future wouldn't be as a running back, however. "I was too tall," he said. "They took my legs out, and I was down."

In the third football game of his senior year, after the shoulder injury, he suffered a torn ACL. He was able to return late in the season, catching 10 passes as a wide receiver.

Like Ruud, with whom he had played on select basketball teams, Mueller never seriously considered other schools. He grew up following the Cornhuskers, in volleyball as well as football.

His mom, Marla (Lichty), earned three letters playing for the Nebraska volleyball team (1978-80). And his dad, Con, was a Nebraska graduate. His sister, Janae, is a junior middle-distance runner on the Nebraska track and field team.

Josh doesn't remember when he attended his first football game at Memorial Stadium or his first volleyball match at the NU Coliseum. He was very young.

It's likely he saw his first football game the same weekend he saw his first volleyball match. They might have been on the same Saturday, in fact, one in the afternoon, the other that night.

His family regularly doubled up. His parents would get the tickets in advance and "you'd be so pumped up all week to get down here," he said. "The football games, I was just blown away by those. When you're little, that stadium is huge, and it gets to rocking. It was awesome."

> "The football games, I was just blown away by those. When you're little, that stadium is huge, and it gets to rocking. It was awesome."
>
> **— Josh Mueller**

So were the volleyball matches, and getting to meet his mom's former teammates.

Nebraska was the first to send him a recruiting letter, and though other schools soon followed, including every one in the Big 12 North, he never wavered about being a Husker.

"This was the only place I'd ever want to go," he said. "My parents said, 'Make sure it's right. Don't rush into it.' I didn't really want to look around, but I did a little bit. I just wanted to come here."

He was 10-years-old when the Cornhuskers won the first of three national championships under Osborne. Fullback Cory Schlesinger, who scored the winning touchdown against Miami in the 1995 Orange Bowl game, was from Duncan, Neb., and went to high school in Columbus.

Mueller's parents lived in Duncan before moving to Columbus and knew the Schlesinger family. So Cory was "big-time," said Mueller. "He was always one of my favorites."

So was Grant Wistrom. And so was Lawrence Phillips, as a football player.

Nebraska didn't have a hard sell in Mueller.

"I wouldn't have been happy anywhere else," he said.

☆ ☆ ☆

Mueller was a four-star recruit, according to Rivals.com. He played in the Nebraska Shrine Bowl All-Star Game and was selected to play in the U.S. Army All-America Bowl in San Antonio. But he was still recovering from the shoulder surgery and had to decline the invitation.

Because of the shoulder, he expected to redshirt, to have time to build up his strength. During the summer after his senior year in high school, he drove to Lincoln twice a week to participate in seven-on-seven drills, lift and rehab his shoulder with trainers Doak Ostergard and Derek Clark.

He made the 3-to-4 hour round trip in his white Grand Am GT.

"You definitely put the miles on," he said. "That's no lie."

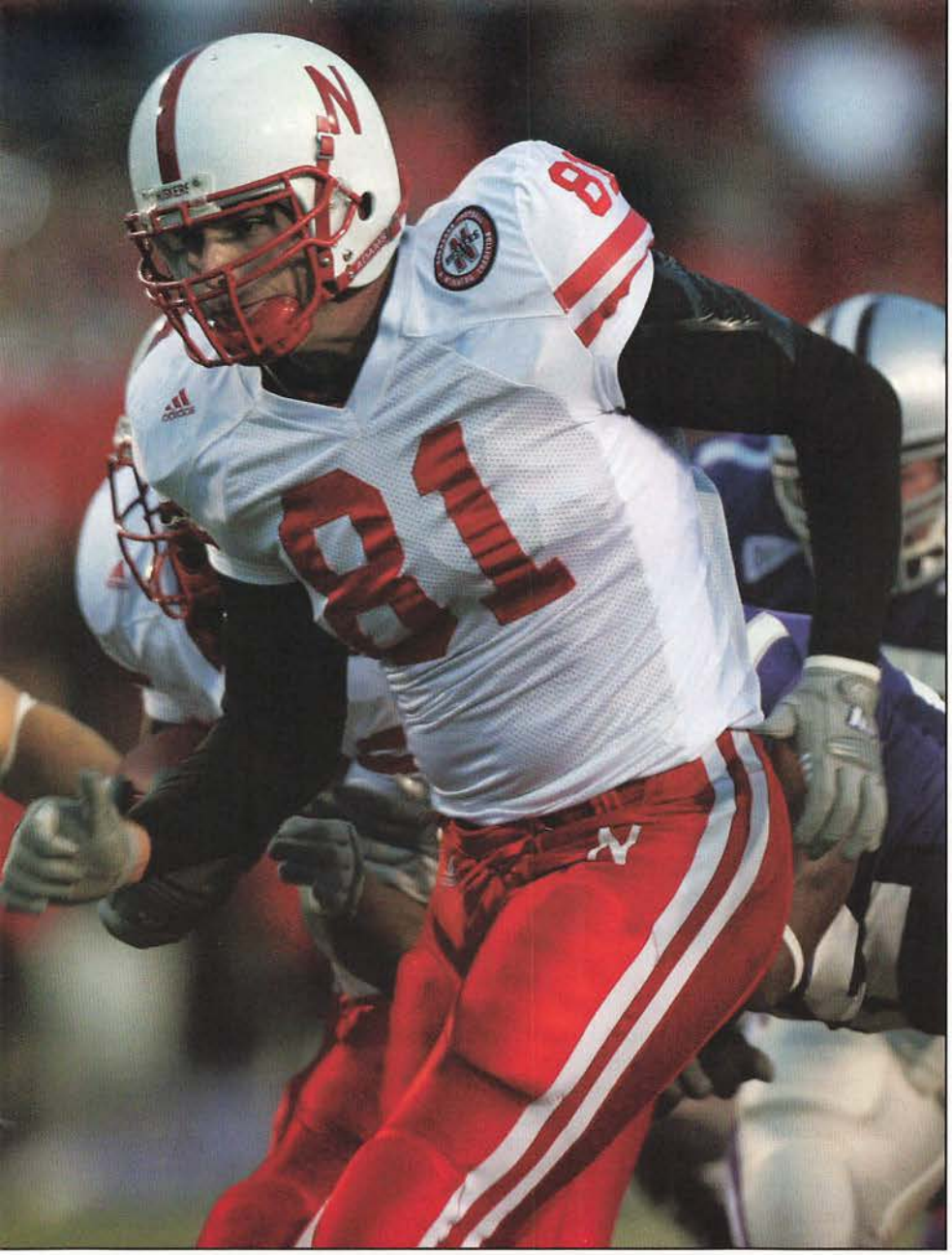
By the start of training camp, Mueller knew many of his teammates. And there were plenty of them to know. When classes began, and everyone could report, he was among 13 tight ends. The group included sophomore Matt Herian, juniors Chris Septak and Dusty Keiser and senior Phil Peetz.

"When you were running with the scout team, you'd be lucky to get two reps every 5 minutes," Mueller said. "That's if you were lucky. There were a lot of us down there, a lot.

"There were a lot of guys, period, on the team then, a ton of guys."

There were so many that some would leave practice early, unnoticed by the coaches. There were so many that during home games, those who were redshirted had to sit in the stands. They were together in the South Stadium, the southeast corner. Games were another opportunity for bonding.

Most of the freshmen, those on scholarship as well as walk-ons, redshirted. Offensive guard Greg Austin and quarterback Joe Dailey were the exceptions. Ruud, a linebacker, and



Tight end Josh Mueller had five catches last season as a junior. Two of the receptions were for touchdowns.

J.B. Phillips, also a tight end and Mueller's freshman roommate, suited up and made some road trips, but neither played.

Everyone else spent practice on the scout teams. For offensive players such as Mueller, that meant lining up against Barrett Ruud, Demorrio Williams, Trevor Johnson, Ryon Bingham, T.J. Hollowell, Fabian Washington and the Bullocks twins, Josh and Daniel.

All of them played, or are playing, in the National Football League.

"It was fun. Those guys, the upperclassmen, were pretty cool if you gave them a good look and you did what it said on the cards. They didn't mess with you," Mueller said. "If you were respectful to them, they were nice to you. You got into it. And you had your hands full."

The offensive scout squad gave a good enough look that the Cornhuskers ranked first in the nation in pass defense, second in scoring defense and 11th in total defense. Even though the team finished with a 9-3 regular-season record, Solich was fired, and defensive coordinator Bo Pelini took charge for the Alamo Bowl victory against Michigan State. After one season, Mueller had a new coach.

"It was difficult," he said. "But at the same time, it was exciting."

☆ ☆ ☆

The difficulty began almost immediately after Bill Callahan was hired as coach. The team was reduced in size, not because players were cut but rather because they cut themselves.

"It was brutal, for two weeks straight," said Mueller.

The running began at 6 a.m. sharp, with taping beginning at 4:30 a.m. That meant he and Phillips had to set their alarm for 4 a.m. So they had to be in bed by 10 p.m., "super early."

Everyone on the eighth floor of the Schramm Hall dormitory "was pretty cool, pretty quiet, because they knew we had to be up by 4," Mueller said.

On the other hand, some on the floor weren't around to make noise. "We'd be getting up to take off running, and there would be people just coming back," he said. "It was messed up."

Mueller will finish his career having earned four letters. He has started games, caught a couple of touchdown passes and played on special teams. He has earned a place on the Big 12 Commissioner's Honor Roll six times and earned second-team academic all-conference recognition.

His cumulative grade-point average is 3.104, with a business administration major and marketing minor. And he is scheduled to graduate in December.

His life has been extremely structured the past four and a half years, and that will change. "It'll be different," he said. "I'll definitely miss it. But it'll be exciting at the same time."

He plans to take a month or so off, maybe go skiing with some of his football buddies, maybe go to Las Vegas or somewhere like that before looking for a job.

He has seen dramatic changes at Nebraska. This season has been disappointing, frustrating, pick the adjective — though none can express the depth of feeling, the emotions.

The relationships will continue, however, and like the degree he's about to finish, nothing can take them away. "Some of us were talking, the old field house isn't there anymore," he said.

The Tom and Nancy Osborne Complex stands in its place, with a locker room equal to any.

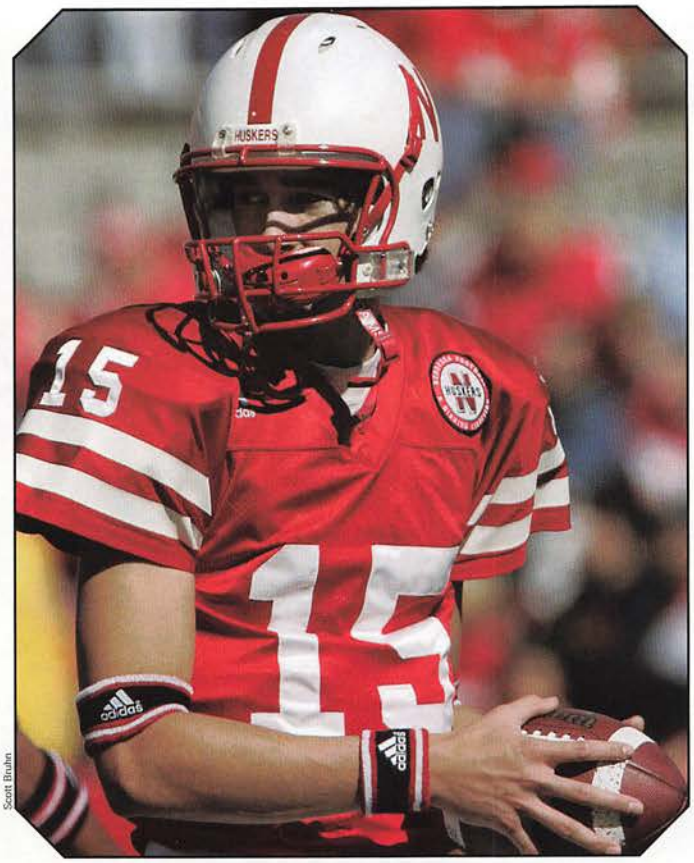
"The freshmen (now) don't even know what it was like down there," Mueller said of Schulte Fieldhouse. "It does seem like it was a long time ago.

"And it was, 5 years. It's gone." ■

10 Questions

with Beau Davis

Junior Quarterback
Venice, Calif.



Scott Bruhn

Occasionally, someone will mention it. But Beau Davis has moved on.

"When people want to bring it up, that's on them," he said one day last spring. "Even if someone did say something, it doesn't bother me. People are going to say what they're going to say.

"I think a lot of people respect me, respect the situation."

The situation, of course, was his Cornhusker debut as a freshman in 2004, when he replaced Joe Dailey in the second half of what would be a 70-10 loss at Texas Tech. He completed 1-of-8 passes with four interceptions, numbers that might have sent him packing for home.

"I think a lot of people kind of expected me to shy back, kind of fade off, leave," he said. "But I'm not that kind of person. I'm going to keep grinding at it."

He's done that since then, redshirting the next season and backing up Zac Taylor and Joe Ganz last season. He saw limited action late in games against Nicholls State and Troy.

When Sam Keller suffered a broken collarbone in the Texas game, Davis moved up to compete with freshman Patrick Witt for the job as back-up to Ganz. And he continued to grind.

"At times, it's hard. You want to be playing," he said on the Wednesday before the Kansas game. "But as a quarterback, there's only one person who plays. Everyone else just has to stay focused and keep their mind straight. If Joe gets hurt, we've got to be ready. That's just the way the position plays."

What would you absolutely not eat?

"I'm not a big vegetable guy. I don't like spinach. I could go without broccoli. Spinach is the worst, by far. I don't know what it is, the texture or something."

Who would you consider the toughest guy on the team?

"I would have to say Steve Octavien. He's a pretty tough kid. If I saw him running at me, if we were running toward each other, I would not want to be in his way. He's a very nice guy, but when he gets on the field, he gets pretty nasty."

If you could spend 30 minutes with a celebrity, sports or otherwise, who would it be, and what would you want to know about them?

"Probably Joe Montana, how it was for him growing up, going from high school to college and his transition after the NFL, stuff he had going for him. He was my idol. I'd like to see what kind of a person he is. I was a Montana-Jerry Rice fan. I liked the connection they had, always on the same page."

What three things would you absolutely have to have on your iPod?

"I'd like a little bit of rock, a little bit of country and a little bit of rap. I'm not too big on one or the other. I like classic and alternative rock, Atreyu."

What's your most embarrassing moment on a football field?

"It would probably have to be when I was in high school. I was a sophomore. I don't know if it was jitters or what, but my first snap with the varsity, I just fell. That was pretty embarrassing. It's something you just don't forget."

If someone came to visit you in Venice, what would you want to show them?

"I'd have to go with the boardwalk. There are a lot of crazy people, a lot of stuff going on that you just don't see anywhere else. So I'd take them down there. I took some people from Nebraska home with me on spring break, my girlfriend and some of her friends, and they were kind of amazed by it."

Tom Brady or Peyton Manning?

"Right now, I'd have to go with Tom Brady, but I think overall, Peyton Manning probably has him. What he (Manning) does with his offense is just amazing. If you watch film on the guy, it's unbelievable what he does under center. Tom Brady's no slouch. Don't get me wrong. But if you ever watch Peyton Manning closely, the way he operates is just unbelievable."

If you could eat only one thing for the next month, what would it be?

"Probably steak. If I had the money, I'd go with filet mignon, but any steak would do."

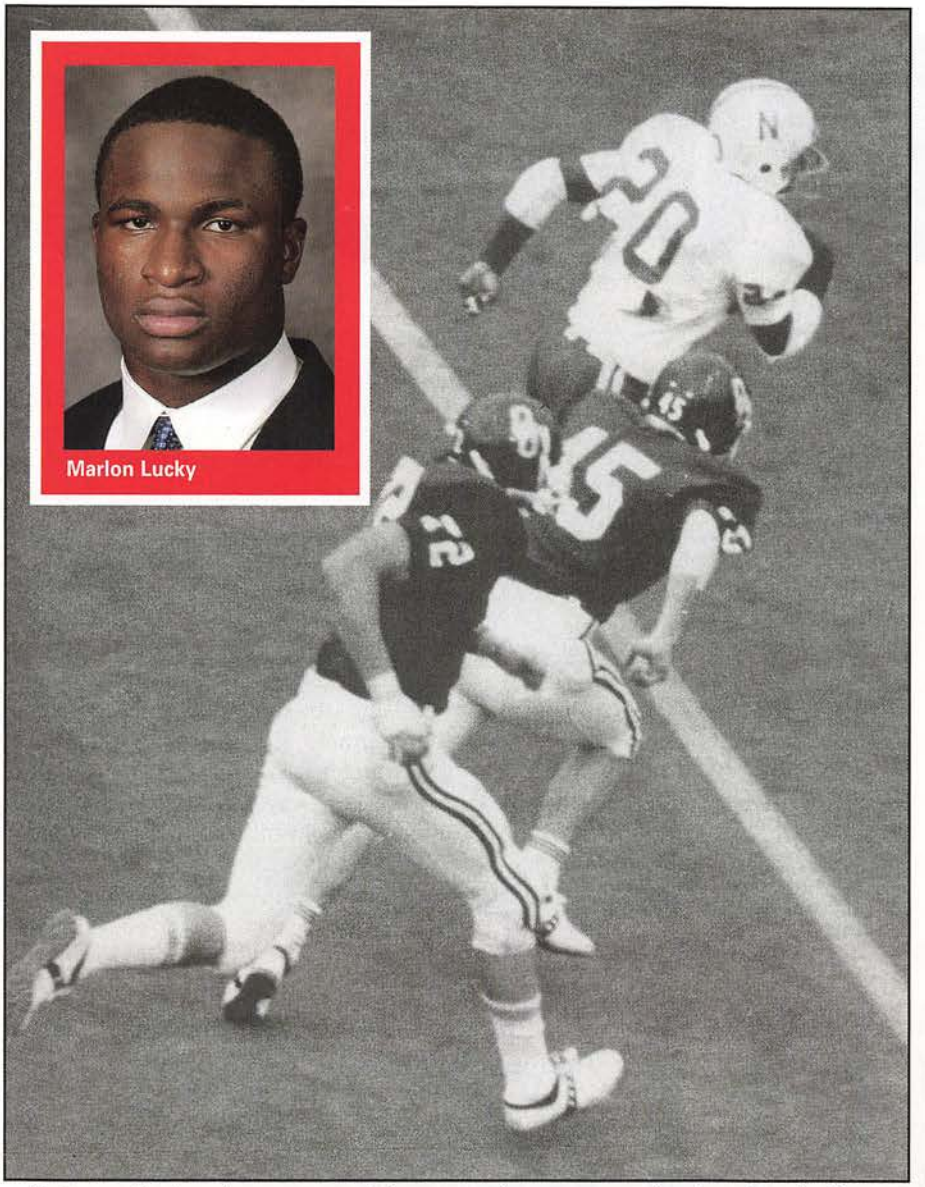
If your life were made into a movie, who would you pick to play your character?

"Maybe Keanu Reeves; I don't know if he's a good actor, but just looking back at the kind of movies he was in, when I was back home and I was big into going to the beach and the ocean, I remember him in 'Point Break.' I like some movies he did."

Pro ice skater, exercise guru or magician?

"I'd be a magician. I kind of look at the quarterback position as being a magician sometimes. You have to be able to hide the ball and you have to be sneaky out there when you're trying to play with the defense. When it comes to faking the ball, you've got to be like a magician, sell it." ■

Chasing The Jet


Marlon Lucky

(Johnny Rodgers' career-receiving records, once seemingly unbreakable, are likely to fall in the not-too-distant future, under an assault facilitated by coach Bill Callahan's West Coast offense. This season, Huskers Illustrated takes a look at the all-time best receivers, as senior Terrence Nunn continues to climb on the all-time receptions list, topped by Rodgers.)

MARLON LUCKY (2005-PRESENT) No. 5 6-0, 210 North Hollywood, Calif.

Lucky's ability to catch the ball out of the backfield has made him an important element of coach Bill Callahan's West Coast offense, as Sam Keller regularly relied on him as an outlet and Joe Ganz picked up where Keller left off. Lucky went into the season with 34 career receptions for 386 yards; he was off the all-time charts in both categories. But through the first 10 games this season, he had caught a school record 61 passes for 512 yards, tops all-time among running backs. Jeff Kinney held the previous record of 433 yards, on 41 catches. In addition, Lucky had moved up to fourth on Nebraska's career-receptions list (ahead of Matt Davison) with 95, behind only Johnny Rodgers (143) and teammates Terrence Nunn (127) and Nate Swift (99). He also set the record for catches in a game by a running back, with 11 against Ball State then broke it against Texas A&M with 13 catches for 125 yards. The 13 catches were the most by any receiver in school history except for split end Dennis Richnafsky, who caught 14 passes for 145 yards against Kansas State in 1967. If Lucky and Swift, also a junior, were to maintain this season's pace, they both would have a shot at breaking Rodgers' career record for receptions. ■

Lists

TRUE FRESHMAN OFFENSIVE LINEMEN

[Since the NCAA restored freshman eligibility in 1972, only a handful of freshman offensive linemen have played enough to earn letters.]

Player, Pos.	Year
Jake Young, C	1986
Will Shields, G	1989
Toniu Fonoti, G	1999
*John Garrison, C	1999
Greg Austin, G	2003
^Matt Slauson, T	2005
^Jacob Hickman, G	2006
^Jaivorio Burkes, T	2007

*Deep-snapper, after moving from defensive end

^Started at least one game

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL CAREER POINTS

[Junior Kelsey Griffin goes into this season needing only 96 points to become the 23rd player in school history to score 1,000 points during her career.]

Player (Years)	Points
1. Karen Jennings (1990-93)	2,405
2. Maurtice Ivy (1985-88)	2,131
3. Amy Stephens (1986-89)	1,976
4. Kiera Hardy (2004-07)	1,930
5. Nicole Kubik (1997-00)	1,867
6. Anna DeForge (1995-98)	1,859
7. Debra Powell (1982-85)	1,843
8. Kathy Hagerstrom (1980-83)	1,778
9. Angie Miller (1984-87)	1,541
10. Diane DelVigna (1979-80)	1,433

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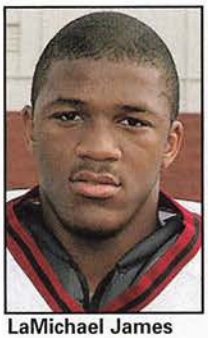
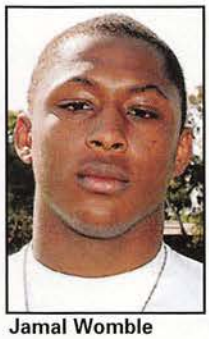
New Prospects

Huskers look to compensate for recent defections

By Rick Shaw


LaMichael James


Jamal Womble

Over the past month, Nebraska has seen its recruiting class dwindle. As the Huskers struggled on the field, a number of Nebraska pledges opted to reopen their recruitment.

Touted running back recruit Jonas Gray de-committed from the Huskers back in October as did defensive tackle Darius Parish, wide receiver D.J. Woods and quarterback Blaine Gabbert. Gray ended up announcing a commitment to Notre Dame shortly after reneging on his pledge to Nebraska.

Several other Husker recruits are staying in the Nebraska fold, for now, but admit that they also plan to take some additional visits over the course of the next few weeks. Linebackers Will Compton and Shaun Mohler said that they plan to shop around, as do defensive end Josh Williams and offensive tackle Bryce Givens.

With the defections of some athletes and the uncertainty of others, the Nebraska staff has turned up the recruiting intensity on a new group of prospects — prospects that will be looked to help fill some critical needs in the 2008 class.

LaMichael James is a four-star run-

NEBRASKA COMMITMENTS FOR 2008

Player	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	40	Hometown (School)
Will Compton	LB	6-2	214	4.5	Bonne Terre, Mo. (North County)
Sean Fisher	LB	6-5	210	4.6	Omaha, Neb. (Millard North)
Bryce Givens	OL	6-6	257	5.1	Denver, Colo. (J.K. Mullen)
Eric Harper	DE	6-4	220	4.62	Marrero La. (John Ehret)
Ricky Henry	OL	6-4	300	5.2	Omaha, Neb. (Burke/North Dakota State College of Science)
Tyson Hetzer	TE	6-7	265	4.75	Glendora, Calif. (Citrus CC)
Adrian Hilburn	WR	6-2	190	4.4	San Francisco, Calif. (City College of SF)
Dan Hoch	OL	6-6	302	5.21	Harlan, Iowa
Keelan Johnson	DB	6-0	195	4.5	Mesa, Ariz.
Simi Kuli	DE	6-4	270	5.0	Hawthorne, Calif. (El Camino CC)
John Levorson	ATH	6-4	185	4.55	Crete, Neb.
Cameron Meredith	DE	6-4	222	4.6	Santa Ana, Calif. (Mater Dei)
Shaun Mohler	LB	6-3	225	4.6	Costa Mesa, Calif. (Orange Coast CC)
Collins Okafor	RB	6-1	210	4.54	Omaha, Neb. (Westside)
Kyler Reed	ATH	6-3	204	4.5	Overland Park, Kan. (St. Thomas Aquinas)
Riley Reiff	DE	6-6	250	4.8	Parkston, S.D.
Doug Rippy	LB	6-2	218	4.6	Columbus, Ohio (McKinley)
Baker Steinkuhler	OL	6-6	290	4.88	Lincoln, Neb. (Southwest)
Brandon Thompson	OL	6-6	280	5.08	The Woodlands, Texas
Joseph Townsend	DT	6-4	295	4.87	San Jose, Calif. (Foothill College)
David Whitmore	DB	6-2	190	4.5	Port Arthur, Texas (Memorial)
Josh Williams	DE	6-4	220	4.8	Denton, Texas (Ryan)

For more daily recruiting information, visit HuskersIllustrated.com, a member of the Rivals.com network.

ning back out of Texarkana (Texas) Liberty-Eylau, who could help fill the void of Gray's departure from the Husker class. The 5-foot-9, 180-pound speedster had Nebraska leading for his services earlier in the recruiting process. Now the Huskers are doing everything they can to get back into his good favor.

"Nebraska came back into the picture," James said. "A couple of days ago I talked to Coach (Randy) Jordan, and he was telling me how high I was on their radar."

James, who already has taken official visits to both Minnesota and TCU, said he is considering taking one of his remaining three trips to Lincoln sometime in the next few weeks. He said he's also looking hard at Houston and Oklahoma State.

Rated the No. 37 prospect in Texas by Rivals.com, James has showcased outstanding speed (4.4-second 40-yard dash) and quickness this season in rushing for 1,400 yards and 17 touchdowns. He said he hopes to finalize a college decision by early January.

Another highly touted running back considering a visit to Lincoln is Jamal Womble out of Sierra Vista (Ariz.) Buena. The 5-10, 216-pound Womble claims scholarship offers in the double digits.

Womble already has taken trips to Boston College and North Carolina and has a late November trip scheduled to visit South Carolina. He said he also hopes to take in the sights and sounds of Lincoln before solidifying his college plans.

"I'm hoping to visit Nebraska," Womble said. "I've heard its an incredible atmosphere out there — very football based. I've heard nothing but good things about Lincoln and the campus itself. It should be a lot of fun."

Womble, rated the No. 17 running back prospect in the country (three stars) by Rivals.com, rushed for more than 1,800 yards and 21 touchdowns this season for Buena High School. In his final game, he rushed for 300 yards and five touchdowns, smashing his school's single-game rushing record.

The blue-chipper from Arizona admits that the Tar Heels currently hold a slight edge for his services but said he won't pull the trigger on a col-

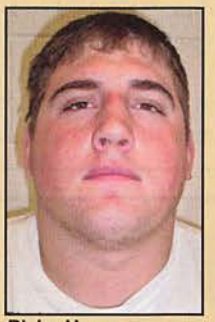
RECRUITING NOTES

Second Time for 2 Commits

By Sean Stevens

When a prospect doesn't qualify academically out of high school, that prospect doesn't often end up with his initial team. Recent Nebraska recruiting classes have produced such highly anticipated prospects as Wallace Franklin and Broderick Hunter who were unable to join the Huskers after high school. Those two young men went the junior college route and never became Huskers. Franklin has moved on to Iowa State, and Hunter is playing Division II football in Arizona.

However, sometimes the JUCO placement works out. NU's 2008 recruiting class contains oral commitments from two players who are on track to reach their goal of becoming Huskers.


Ricky Henry

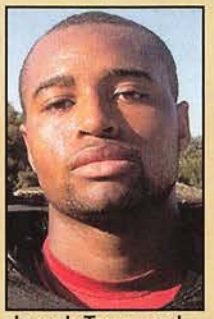
Offensive lineman Ricky Henry (6-foot-4, 300 pounds) initially signed with Nebraska in 2006 out of Omaha Burke. He came out of high school at 6-3 and 280 as Rivals.com's No. 9-ranked offensive center prospect nationally and the No. 2 player in Nebraska behind current Husker redshirt freshman D.J. Jones.

His high school coach at the time, Jack Ohlendt, compared him to former Husker legend Dave Rimington.

"Yeah, I had the opportunity to coach Dave, and Dave was a great impact player back then," Coach Ohlendt said. "Kids are a lot larger now because of training, but Ricky has the same kind of feet as far as quickness and agility, which is a pretty good attribute to have for a lineman. Ricky was the same kind of impact player for us that Dave was back then."

Henry did not qualify academically and moved on to North Dakota State College of Science, where he developed his game while getting his grades in order. Henry chose Nebraska (again) over offers from Colorado and Houston.

"I don't know, I just felt like I needed to go back home," Henry said. "I didn't want to go anywhere else; I wanted to be closer to home. Nebraska wants me to play guard or center, but I've never played center before. Coach (Dennis) Wagner and I have a pretty good talk here and there."


Joseph Townsend

Another player who missed his first chance to be a Husker but is coming back is defensive lineman Joseph Townsend (6-4, 295) of Foothill College in Los Altos Hills, Calif. Townsend was expected to be a Husker last fall, but fell just two classes short of qualifying. He will now join the program as part of the 2008 class.

Townsend has a unique perspective on the current state of Nebraska football, as his older brother Larry was a defensive tackle on the 1995 Nebraska National Championship team. During that time, young Joseph spent some time around the team and got to know the current Nebraska interim athletic director.

"Mostly because of Tom Osborne," he said, referring to why he will sign with NU. "If he wasn't the director . . . I don't know. I have known him since I was knee high. "I know Osborne is going to make the right decision. He is Mr. Nebraska, and he knows what to do."

Townsend will add depth to the defensive line as either a tackle or end. ■

lege commitment until he takes his remaining visits.

With Givens looking around, the Huskers know they may need to add another offensive line recruit or two to the mix before Signing Day in February. One prospect who is high on their wish list is Vaughn Dotsy. The 6-4, 350-pound lineman from St. Bonaventure High School in Ventura, Calif., said he hopes to check out the Husker campus before making his college pick.

"I want to get out to see Nebraska," Dotsy said. "I've been talking to Coach (Dennis) Wagner quite a bit. I'm going to try and get out there and see what it's like. They have a good program with a good reputation."

Rated the No. 75 prospect in California (three stars) by Rivals, Dotsy claims 15 scholarship offers. Nebraska, LSU, Michigan, Florida, Arizona State are among those giving chase.

"As far as a decision, that all depends on the situation," Dotsy said. "If I know that a school is right for me, then I'll get it (a decision) over with when I get there. I'll involve my family and everything, but I'm not going to drag out the process if I don't have to."

Anthony Lewis is a 6-2, 210-pound linebacker out of Aldine, Texas, the Huskers are actively recruiting. With 4.5 speed in the 40, Lewis has the ability to make plays all over the field.

Through the first eight games of the 2007 season, Lewis racked up 73 tackles (56 solo), including seven sacks, and recovered two fumbles. He said he's always admired Nebraska.

"With Nebraska, I still feel the same way that I always have about them," Lewis said. "I've been watching them for a while, and I like their whole demeanor. I like the way they play.

"The fact that they are having a rough season doesn't change anything for me. I know they're going to have their ups and downs."

Lewis, rated the No. 61 outside linebacker in the country (three stars) by Rivals, also holds scholarship offers from Arizona, Kansas, Purdue, Minnesota and Iowa State, among others.

With the departure of Parish from the recruiting class, the Huskers lost their lone high school defensive tackle commit. However, they're hoping that Quentin Toailoa could end up being a worthy replacement.

The 6-5, 275-pound athlete from Redlands (Calif.) East Valley visited Oct. 19-20 and said he was impressed with what he saw.

"I had a great visit to Nebraska," Toailoa said. "They'd be my top choice right now.

"The fans up there are incredible. The team was losing but even in the fourth quarter, the stands were still packed. No one left."

Rated a three-star prospect by Rivals, Toailoa also holds offers from Arizona, Oregon State, San Diego State and Nevada. He said he'll likely wait until early 2008 before making his selection.

"I'll probably check out a few Pac-10 schools," Toailoa said. "Nebraska set the bar pretty high, though.

"My mom wanted me to take that trip to Nebraska, and I found out why. She knew all about the tradition up there. Now, so do I." ■

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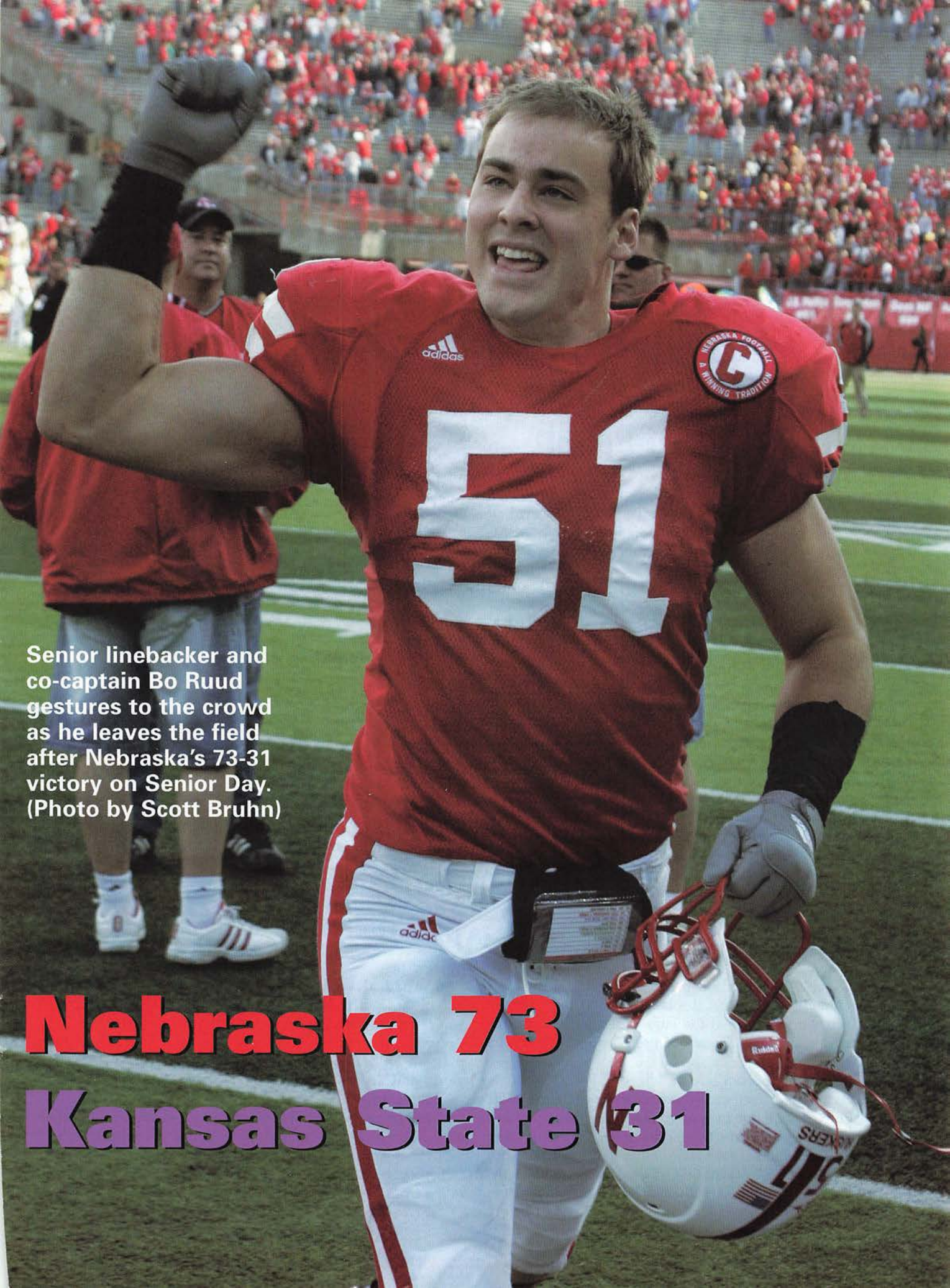


Senior linebacker and co-captain Bo Ruud gestures to the crowd as he leaves the field after Nebraska's 73-31 victory on Senior Day. (Photo by Scott Bruhn)

Nebraska 73
Kansas State 31

'My Eyes Got R

Grixby's long kickoff return starts Husker scoring parade

By Mike Babcock
Photos: Scott Bruhn

Kansas State needed 3 minutes and 44 seconds to silence the Senior Day crowd of 84,655 at Memorial Stadium, on an unseasonably warm November day. After failing to pick up a first down on their first possession, the Wildcats drove 72 yards on 10 plays for a touchdown.

Considering what had happened to Nebraska since late September, when it defeated Iowa State in Lincoln, a feeling of "here we go again" quickly settled over the stadium.

The Cornhuskers had lost five games in a row, most recently by 76-39 at Kansas.

The feeling disappeared as quickly, however, on the ensuring kickoff. The Cornhuskers' Cortney Grixby fielded the ball at his own 6-yard line and didn't stop running until he was in the north end zone.

TURNING POINT

He went straight up the field, stumbled near the 25-yard line, regained his balance and wasn't challenged the rest of the way. "My eyes got real big," he said. "I haven't seen that since high school. I mean, that was real good. I was just thinking, 'Don't get caught. Please, don't get caught.'

"It's a numbing feeling. It seemed like it took forever to get to the end zone."

Actually, only 13 seconds elapsed on the game clock.

Beyond midfield, he saw the fans on their feet, and he allowed himself to glance at the large video screen atop the North Stadium skyboxes. He saw himself. And he saw no one even close to him.

"Then I got kind of comfortable," he said.

Nebraska would score nine more touchdowns, for a 73-31 victory. But Grixby's return was pivotal. "Any time you can answer a score with a score, I think that takes the wind out of your sails somewhat because now you've got to go back out there and do it again," coach Bill Callahan said.

Kansas State responded with a drive to a field goal to regain the lead. But Nebraska would score 45 points before the Wildcats managed to score again, near the end of the third quarter.

Nebraska's Cortney Grixby leaves Kansas State kicker Brooks Rossman grabbing air on the way to a 94-yard kickoff return in the first quarter.

"We had a lot of players making plays today," said Grixby, one of 29 Cornhusker seniors. "We had a complete game. It was the most complete game we've had all season."

Junior quarterback Joe Ganz was among those making plays, a lot of them. He completed 30-of-40 passes for 510 yards and seven touchdowns. That's right, lucky seven, a school record.

"It all comes down to having time," a beleaguered Callahan said. "You've got to have time to throw the football, and I thought the protection was just outstanding today."

So was the running game, when it needed to be. Nebraska rolled up 705 yards of offense.

"It was just time, time for us to put it together, show what we've been working for since summer, to put together a com-

eal Big'

plete game," said Grixby. "It's disappointing it came so late."

But better late than never. "It builds confidence," Grixby said.

That confidence might propel the Cornhuskers into bowl eligibility.

A victory at Colorado on the day after Thanksgiving would be their sixth. The Buffaloes also need a victory to be bowl eligible, after losing at Iowa State, 31-28. So it'll be like a playoff.

During the five-game losing streak, "we thought we forgot how to win," said Grixby. "Today we came out and everybody had a lot of enthusiasm. We got it back, how to win a football game."

His kickoff return showed the way. And Ganz took it from there offensively.

Grixby credited redshirted freshman offensive lineman Mike Smith with an assist on the return. Smith "chipped" a would-be tackler, who "didn't get a clean shot" as a result and

Report Card

RUSHING OFFENSE

The Cornhusker running game started slowly, gaining only 23 yards in the first quarter. By the second quarter, however, the Kansas State defense was off-balance. Lucky averaged 6.4 yards per carry and went over 100 yards rushing for the fifth time this season. He needs 50 yards for the 28th 1,000-yard rushing season in school history. ★★★★

PASSING OFFENSE

Joe Ganz was exceptional, completing 30-of-40 passes for 510 yards and seven touchdowns, without an interception. The yardage and the touchdowns were school single-game records. Ganz credited those around him. "It's easy to find open receivers when you've got a lot of time and receivers are running real crisp routes, backs are getting in check-down lanes and picking up blitzers," he said. ★★★★★

RUSHING DEFENSE

Sure, the Wildcats' James Johnson rushed for 129 yards, including 53 for a touchdown. But that came with only 2:19 remaining, against the reserves. Also consider that Nebraska went into the game ranked No. 118 (out of 119) in rushing defense. "I thought our defense played well," coach Bill Callahan said. And it started up front against the run. ★★★★

PASSING DEFENSE

Kansas State's passing numbers weren't bad: 26-of-44 for 320 yards, without an interception. But the Cornhusker defense applied consistent pressure to quarterback Josh Freeman, sacking him four times. Kansas State had allowed only eight sacks in the previous nine games. ★★★

SPECIAL TEAMS

Cortney Grixby's kickoff return for a touchdown was the centerpiece of solid special teams play. "I thought special teams really ignited our play, and Cortney's return especially," said Callahan.

Andre Jones had a career-high 43-yard punt return, and Adi Kunalic put four of 12 kickoffs into the end zone for touchbacks. "I don't know if Adi's ready for an 11:30 (a.m.) kickoff yet, but as time went on, I thought he got better," Callahan said. ★★★★

Numbers

7

Ganz shattered the school record for touchdown passes in a game. The previous record was five, shared by Steve Taylor (1987 vs. Oklahoma), Eric Crouch (2000 vs. Iowa) and Joe Dailey (2004 vs. Baylor). Ganz's 510 passing yards broke the school record set earlier this season (438) by Sam Keller against Ball State. Ganz passed for 405 yards the previous week at Kansas.

Nebraska-Kansas State Notes

SENIOR DAY

The game was the last at Memorial Stadium for 29 Cornhusker seniors:

Zack Bowman (Anchorage, Alaska), Lance Brandenburgh (Overland Park, Kan.), Brett Byford (Hartselle, Ala.), Ben Eisenhart (Culbertson, Neb.), Dan Erickson (Omaha), Tierre Green (Omaha), Cortney Grixby (Omaha), Victory Haines (Logan, Utah), Frantz Hardy (Miami, Fla.), Sean Hill (Lisle, Ill.), Brandon Johnson (Chicago), Andre Jones (Fort Walton Beach, Fla.), Sam Keller (Danville, Calif.), Tyler Kester (Clearwater, Neb.), Kevin Luhrs (Omaha), Corey McKeon (Naperville, Ill.), Josh Mueller (Columbus, Neb.), Carl Nicks (Salinas, Calif.), Terrence Nunn (Houston), Steve Octavien (Naples, Fla.), J.B. Phillips (Colleyville, Texas), Jordan Picou (Rialto, Calif.) Andy Poulosky (Ponca, Neb.), Maurice Purify (Eureka, Calif.), Thomas Rice (Lincoln, Neb.), Bo Ruud (Lincoln, Neb.), Andy Sand (Lincoln, Neb.), Matt Senske (Bellevue, Neb.), Bryan Wilson (Granada Hills, Calif.).

Brandenburgh, Keller and Luhrs didn't suit up because of season-ending injuries. Luhrs served as an undergraduate assistant this season.

"It was great the way the fans honored them," said coach Bill Callahan.

AMAZING

Eisenhart, one of the seniors who walked on and earned a scholarship, joined Bowman, Byford and Ruud as co-captains and started at safety for the first time in his Cornhusker career. The lopsided victory was "the most amazing thing," Eisenhart said. "I don't know if I can even explain it. The last five weeks haven't been very good to us, so to get this done, especially on the last home game, is a great feeling and is definitely something I'll remember for the rest of my life, for sure."

True freshman cornerback Anthony Blue also started for the first time.

THREE-FOR-THREE

Hardy, a senior wide receiver, caught three passes, all of them for touchdowns. "I didn't really have to do anything. Joe (Ganz) just threw the ball, and it was right on the money," said Hardy.

"Every pass he threw was right on the money."

The touchdown-pass plays covered 36, 8 and 39 yards.

GETTING HIS KICKS

Redshirted freshman Alex Henery remained perfect. He was successful on 10-of-10 extra-point kicks, to give him 40-of-40 for the season, and he kicked a 27-yard field goal in the second quarter, his eighth in eight attempts this season.

BIG PLAYS

Junior quarterback Joe Ganz's record-setting passing performance included 12 plays that went for more than 20 yards. The previous week at Kansas, six of his pass completions picked up more than 20 yards. Early in the third quarter, eight of his 15 pass completions had gone for more than 20 yards and 14 of the 15 had gained 10 or more yards.

SCORING EXPLOSION

The 73 points were the most ever scored by Nebraska against Kansas State. The previous high was 62 in 1984. And they were the most the Cornhuskers had scored against any opponent since 1997, went they hung 77 on Iowa State. They weren't trying to run up the score, however.

"We just kept playing," Callahan said. "I didn't think about the score. We just wanted to go out and execute. You get one of those days where everything clicks. It's a good feeling."

RARE INDEED

Kansas State has won only eight times in 49 games played in Lincoln, and only once since 1968. The Wildcats won at Memorial Stadium in 2003. Nebraska has won the last three games in the series. The victory gave the Cornhuskers a 4-3 record at home, marking the 39th consecutive season in which they've finished with a winning record at Memorial Stadium.

ROSE RESIGNS

Jim Rose, the radio voice of the Huskers the past six seasons, announced his resignation on the Tuesday before the Kansas State game, citing health considerations and a desire to spend more time with his family. The 44-year-old Rose didn't broadcast the previous week's game at Kansas.

Greg Sharpe, director of operations for a Topeka, Kan., radio station and former Kansas State play-by-play announcer, replaced Rose for the Kansas State game, as he did for the Kansas game, and will finish the season at Colorado. Rose will continue with the Husker Sports Network in sales. ■

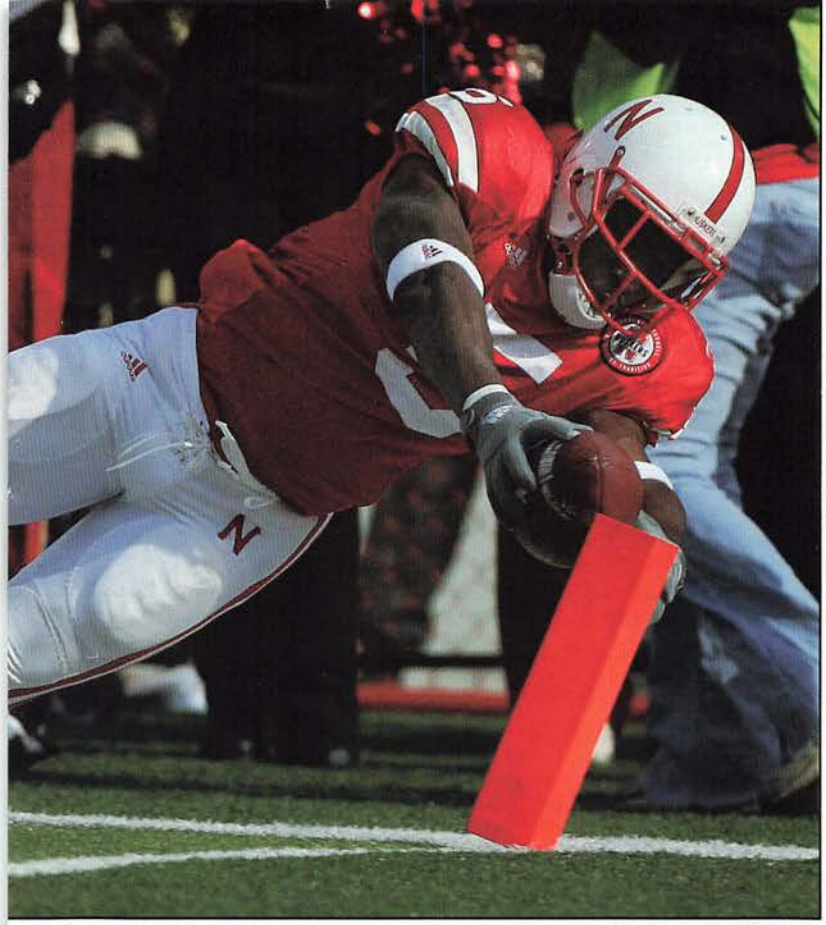
There were offensive highlights galore for the Huskers. I-ba downs. Wide receiver Frantz Hardy (below left) also had thr Joe Ganz (below right), who scrambled for 23 yard on this f

was pushed off into the kicker. "Once I saw him in the kicker, I thought I might be able to go all th Grixby said.

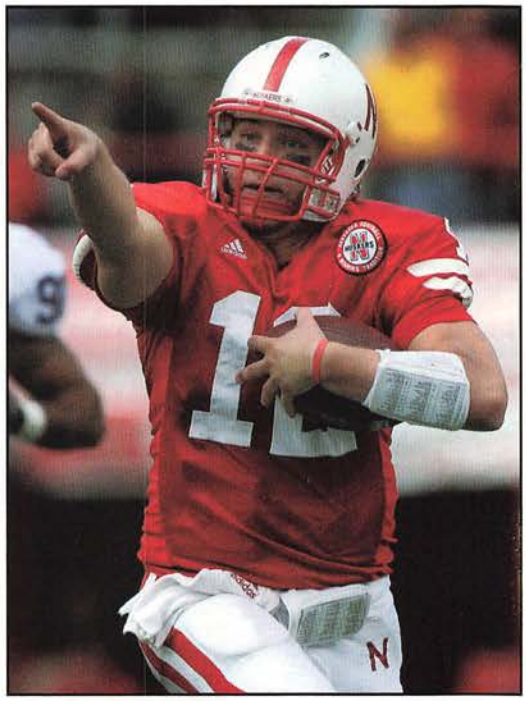
A kicker probably wasn't going to tackle him, ar

But "it helps when you've got a big Mike in front he said.

I-back Marlon Lucky probably would have agre knocked a defender out of the way on Nebraska



k Marlon Lucky (above) stretches to reach the pylon for one of his three touch-
ee touchdowns, which came on just three catches. Directing it all was quarterback
ourth-and-20 play, in addition to passing for a school-record seven touchdowns.



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scoring play, 26 yards on a pass from Ganz.

Lucky would score two more touchdowns, both on runs.

Grixby's return reversed the trend of recent weeks and got things rolling.

"We've got the greatest fans in the country," he said. "I really appreciate the support they've showed me throughout these four years. And to give them a show like this was something good." ■

Who Stood Out?

OFFENSE

Kansas State coach Ron Prince was profuse in his praise of junior quarterback Joe Ganz, who allowed the Cornhuskers to do "whatever they wanted to do in the passing game," he said.

Joe Ganz

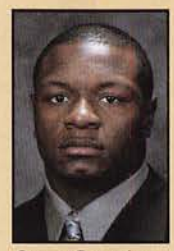
"If we were in zone (coverage), he was clued into exactly what kind of zone it was and the routes he needed to throw. If it was man (coverage), he was clued in exactly. If we tried to pressure him, the offensive line helped pick it up, and he was absolutely spectacular."

Ganz was clearly the "key to this thing," said Prince. "Last time I saw a quarterback that good was Philip Rivers, so that's pretty good."

Rivers plays for the San Diego Chargers.

DEFENSE

Senior linebacker Steve Octavien set the defensive tone in the first quarter, with five of his team-high nine tackles, including two for losses and one of Nebraska's four sacks.

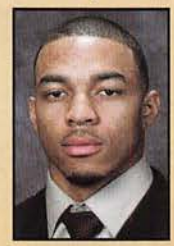


Steve Octavien

Octavien added another tackle for loss and half a sack, along with cornerback Armando Murillo. He also broke up a pass and was credited with a quarterback hurry. The other sacks were by safety Tierre Green (19 yards) and defensive end Barry Turner (14 yards). "From a yardage standpoint, we had some yards here and there (428 total), but this was about as thorough a defeat as I've experienced," Prince said.

SPECIAL TEAMS

Senior cornerback Cortney Grixby's 94-yard kickoff return for a touchdown was the first by a Cornhusker since 1998, when Joe Walker returned one 99 yards against Louisiana Tech. Grixby, whose brother DeAntae was on that team, wasn't at the game but he has watched the return on video. "I remember watching Joe Walker running up the sideline," Grixby said. His return was right up the middle.



Cortney Grixby

"It was obviously a big play. They responded," said Kansas State wide receiver Jordy Nelson. "When you get a lead, you can't give seven points right back to them. It was a big play in the game."

GAME STATS

SCORING

Nov. 10, 2007
Memorial Stadium Lincoln, Neb.
Attendance 84,665

	1	2	3	4	F
Kansas State	10	0	7	14	31
Nebraska	14	24	14	21	73

First Quarter

		KS	NU
KS	Nelson Pass from Freeman 21-yards (Rossman Kick) 08:55 **Drive:** 10 plays 72 yds 3:31	7	0
NU	Grixby Kickoff return 94-yards (Henery Kick) 08:42	7	7
KS	Rossman 31-yard Field Goal 04:34 **Drive:** 10 plays 62 yds 4:02	10	7
NU	Lucky Pass from Ganz 26-yards (Henery Kick) 00:32 **Drive:** 8 plays 76 yds 3:54	10	14

Second Quarter

NU	Hardy Pass from Ganz 36-yards (Henery Kick) 13:09 **Drive:** 1 plays 36 yds 0:06	10	21
NU	Henery 27-yard Field Goal 06:39 **Drive:** 10 plays 80 yds 5:24	10	24
NU	Lucky 5-yard Run (Henery Kick) 02:05 **Drive:** 8 plays 73 yds 3:41	10	31
NU	Peterson Pass from Ganz 23-yards (Henery Kick) 00:08 **Drive:** 3 plays 54 yds 0:14	10	38

Third Quarter

NU	Hardy Pass from Ganz 8-yards (Henery Kick) 12:00 **Drive:** 10 plays 80 yds 3:00	10	45
NU	Hardy Pass from Ganz 39-yards (Henery Kick) 06:16 **Drive:** 8 plays 91 yds 3:38	10	52
KS	Freeman 4-yard Run (Rossman Kick) 02:48 **Drive:** 9 plays 80 yds 3:28	17	52

Fourth Quarter

NU	Nunn Pass from Ganz 7-yards (Henery Kick) 14:17 **Drive:** 12 plays 74 yds 3:25	17	59
NU	Peterson Pass from Ganz 11-yards (Henery Kick) 10:58 **Drive:** 4 plays 62 yds 1:09	17	66
KS	Alstatt Pass from Freeman 1-yard (Rossman Kick) 10:02 **Drive:** 4 plays 80 yds 0:56	24	66
NU	Lucky 3-yard Run (Henery Kick) 04:04 **Drive:** 11 plays 74 yds 5:53	24	73
KS	Johnson 53-yard Run (Rossman Kick) 2:19 **Drive:** 5 plays 80 yds 1:45	31	73

TEAM STATS

	KS	NU
Total First Downs	24	35
Rushing	8	11
Passing	14	23
Penalty	2	1
Rushing Attempts	28	37
Yards Gained Rushing	176	199
Yards Lost Rushing	68	16
Net Yards Rushing	108	183
Net Yards Passing	320	519
Passes Attempted	44	43
Passes Completed	26	31
Had Intercepted	0	0
Percent Completion	59.1%	72.1%
Yards per Attempt	7.3	12.1
Yards per Completion	12.3	16.7
Total Offensive Plays	72	80
Total Net Yards	428	702
Avg. Gain Per Play	5.9	8.8
Fumbles: No-Lost	3-0	1-0
Penalties: No-Yards	7-40	6-71
Punts: No-Yards	6-252	1-36
Avg. Per Punt	42.0	36.0
Avg. Net Punt	34.0	36.0
Punt Returns: No-Yards	0-0	3-48
Kickoff Returns: No-Yards	7-92	5-154
Interception Returns: No-Yards	0-0	0-0
Fumble Returns: No-Yards	0-0	0-0
Miscellaneous Yards	0	0
Possession Time	25:49	34:11
Third-Down Conversions	6-14	5-11
Percentage	42.9%	45.5%
Fourth-Down Conversions	0-1	3-3
Percentage	0.0%	100.0%
Sacks By: No-Yards	3-15	4-40

Despite the five straight losses, the crowd was mostly positive for the final home game.

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

KANSAS STATE

RUSHING

	No	Gain	Lost	Net	Avg	TD	Lg
Johnson	16	133	4	129	8.1	1	53
Patton	3	15	0	15	5.0	0	15
Murphy	2	13	9	4	2.0	0	13
TEAM	1	0	15	-15	-15.0	0	0
Freeman	6	15	40	-25	-4.2	1	11
Total	**28**	**176**	**68**	**108**	**3.9**	**2**	**53**

PASSING

	Att	Comp	%	Int	Yds	TD	Lg
Freeman	44	26	59.1	0	320	2	66
Total	**44**	**26**	**59.1**	**0**	**320**	**2**	**66**

RECEIVING

	No	Yds	TD	Lg
Nelson	9	125	1	21
Murphy	5	106	0	66
Johnson	3	38	0	19
Gonzalez	2	25	0	13
Mastrud	3	13	0	6
Purvis	1	6	0	6
Wilson	1	5	0	5
Alstatt	1	1	1	1
Patton	1	1	0	1
Total	**26**	**320**	**2**	**66**

KICKOFF RETURNS

	No	Yds	TD	Lg
McKinney	6	110	0	30
McCardle	0	14	0	14
TEAM	1	-32	0	0
Total	**7**	**92**	**0**	**30**

PUNTING

	No	Avg	Lg	Blk	TB	FC	50+	In 20
Reyer	6	42.0	56	0	0	1	1	2
Total	**6**	**42.0**	**56**	**0**	**0**	**1**	**1**	**2**

FIELD GOALS

	Made	Att	Lg	Blkd
Rossman	1	1	31	0
Total	**1**	**1**	**31**	**0**

DEFENSE LEADERS

	Solo	Ast	Tot	TFL	Sack	PD	FF	FR
Carney	6	7	13	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
McKinney	4	3	7	0-0	0-0	1	0	0
Walker	3	4	7	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Watts	4	3	7	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Cheatham	4	2	6	1-2	1-2	1	0	0
Houlik	4	2	6	1-3	1-3	0	0	0
Perry	4	2	6	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Roland	3	3	6	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Balkcom	2	2	4	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Childs	0	4	4	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Baldwin	3	0	3	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Campbell	2	1	3	2-20	1-10	0	1	0
Manu	1	2	3	0-0	0-0	1	0	0

NEBRASKA

RUSHING

	No	Gain	Lost	Net	Avg	TD	Lg
Lucky	16	103	0	103	6.4	2	29
Castille	11	50	0	50	4.5	0	21
Ganz	6	33	15	18	3.0	0	23
Purify	1	7	0	7	7.0	0	7
Helu	2	6	0	6	3.0	0	4
TEAM	1	0	1	-1	-1.0	0	0
Total	**37**	**199**	**16**	**183**	**4.9**	**2**	**29**

PASSING

	Att	Comp	%	Int	Yds	TD	Lg
Ganz	40	30	75.0	0	510	7	39
Davis	1	1	100.0	0	9	0	9
Lucky	1	0	0.0	0	0	0	0
TEAM	1	0	0.0	0	0	0	0
Total	**43**	**31**	**72.1**	**0**	**519**	**7**	**39**

RECEIVING

	No	Yds	TD	Lg
Purify	6	108	0	28
Peterson	4	85	2	31
Hardy	3	83	3	39
Lucky	6	78	1	26
Nunn	5	56	1	18
Swift	2	38	0	28
Holt	1	35	0	35
Erickson	3	25	0	11
Castille	1	11	0	11
Total	**31**	**519**	**7**	**39**

PUNT RETURNS

	No	Yds	TD	Lg
Jones	3	48	0	43
Total	**3**	**48**	**0**	**43**

KICKOFF RETURNS

	No	Yds	TD	Lg
Grixby	2	107	1	94
Jones	2	39	0	20
Paul	1	8	0	8
Total	**5**	**154**	**1**	**94**

PUNTING

	No	Avg	Lg	Blk	TB	FC	50+	In 20
Titchener	1	36.0	36	0	0	1	0	0
Total	**1**	**36.0**	**36**	**0**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**0**

FIELD GOALS

	Made	Att	Lg	Blkd
Henery	1	1	27	0
Total	**1**	**1**	**27**	**0**

DEFENSE

	Solo	Ast	Tot	TFL	Sack	PD	FF	FR
Octavien	4	5	9	2.5-20	1.5-5	1	0	0
Asante	5	1	6	0-0	0-0	1	0	0
Murillo	2	4	6	1.5-4	0.5-2	0	0	0
Blue	3	2	5	0-0	0-0	1	0	0
McKeon	1	4	5	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Green	3	1	4	1-14	1-14	0	0	0
Ruud	0	4	4	0-0	0-0	1	0	0
Eisenhart	2	1	3	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Steinkuhler	2	1	3	1-4	0-0	0	0	0
Turner	1	2	3	1-19	1-19	0	0	0
Amukamara	1	1	2	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Erickson	1	1	2	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Grixby	2	0	2	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Hagg	0	2	2	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Suh	0	2	2	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Thenarse	1	1	2	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Washington	1	1	2	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Allen	0	1	1	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Cammack	1	0	1	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Covey	0	1	1	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Culbert	0	1	1	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Dixon	1	0	1	1-9	0-0	0	0	0
Lawrence	1	0	1	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Paul	0	1	1	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Rice	1	0	1	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Sievers	0	1	1	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Wilson	0	1	1	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Wortman	0	1	1	0-0	0-0	0	0	0

2007 Season Stats

RUSHING LEADERS

	G	No	Gain	Lost	Net	Avg	TD	Lg	Yd/G
Lucky, Marlon	11	194	988	38	950	4.9	8	41	86.4
Castille, Quentin	11	76	347	4	343	4.5	4	23	31.2
Helu, Roy	7	45	212	3	209	4.6	0	24	29.9
Glenn, Cody	5	27	87	9	78	2.9	2	20	15.6
Ganz, Joe	5	14	78	22	56	4.0	1	23	11.2
Culbert, Major	9	5	35	0	35	7.0	1	17	3.9
Hardy, Frantz	11	1	19	0	19	19.0	0	19	1.7
Purify, Maurice	10	2	15	0	15	7.5	0	8	1.5

PASSING

	G	Att	Comp	%	Int	Yds	TD	Lg	YD/G
Keller, Sam	9	325	205	63.1	10	2422	14	73	269.1
Ganz, Joe	5	94	58	61.7	4	951	12	62	190.2
Lucky, Marlon	11	2	1	50.0	0	20	1	20	1.8
Davis, Beau	1	1	1	100.0	0	9	0	9	9.0

RECEIVING LEADERS

	G	No	Yds	Avg	TD	Lg	Yd/G
Purify, Maurice	10	46	678	14.7	6	60	67.8
Lucky, Marlon	11	67	590	8.8	3	62	53.6
Swift, Nate	11	34	488	14.4	3	35	44.4
Nunn, Terrence	11	31	364	11.7	1	30	33.1
Peterson, Todd	11	16	313	19.6	4	44	28.5
Hardy, Frantz	11	14	294	21.0	3	60	26.7
Hill, Sean	11	18	288	16.0	3	73	26.2
Erickson, Dan	11	8	77	9.6	0	19	7.0
Glenn, Cody	5	6	52	8.7	0	19	10.4
Holt, Menelik	8	2	48	24.0	0	35	6.0
Helu, Roy	7	5	40	8.0	0	21	5.7
Teafatiller, Hunter	9	4	34	8.5	0	13	3.8
Sand, Andy	11	3	31	10.3	0	15	2.8
Castille, Quentin	11	2	26	13.0	0	15	2.4
McNeill, Mike	6	1	25	25.0	0	25	4.2
Phillips, J.B.	11	2	19	9.5	1	13	1.7
Young, Dreu	8	1	14	14.0	0	14	1.8
Lawson, Thomas	9	3	11	3.7	3	6	1.2

PUNT RETURNS LEADERS

	G	No	Yds	Avg	TD	Lg	Yd/G
Jones, Andre	10	6	83	13.8	0	43	8.3
Grixby, Cortney	11	7	36	5.1	0	16	3.3

KICKOFF RETURNS LEADERS

	G	No	Yds	Avg	TD	Lg	Yd/G
Grixby, Cortney	11	38	987	26.0	1	94	89.7
Jones, Andre	10	15	317	21.1	0	31	31.7
Hardy, Frantz	11	2	48	24.0	0	29	4.4

PUNTING

	G	No	Avg	Lg	Blk	TB	FC	50+	In 20
Titchener, Dan	11	45	41.0	52	0	3	14	2	14
Henery, Alex	11	1	32.0	32	0	0	0	0	1

FIELD GOALS

	G	Att	Made	Lg	Blkd
Henery, Alex	11	8	8	39	0
Kunalic, Adi	11	1	1	46	0

DEFENSE LEADERS

	G	Tack	Ast	Tot	TFL	Sack	PD	FF	FR
Octavien, Steve	11	49	31	80	8-50	1-9	3	0	0
Asante, Larry	11	35	36	71	0-0	0-0	4	1	0
McKeon, Corey	11	27	36	63	6-19	1-8	6	0	1
Murillo, Armando	11	36	27	63	1-4	0-2	7	0	0
Brandenburgh, L	9	37	14	51	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Green, Tierre	11	21	28	49	1-14	1-14	3	0	0
Ruud, Bo	10	22	24	46	3-9	0-0	2	2	0
Potter, Zach	11	25	18	43	9-23	2-10	1	1	1
Dillard, Phillip	11	20	14	34	0-1	0-0	2	0	0
Eisenhart, Ben	11	19	15	34	0-0	0-0	0	0	0

TEAM STATISTICS	NU	OPP
Total First Downs	264	273
Rushing	82	125
Passing	164	130
Penalty	18	18
Total Net Yards	5009	5204
Total Plays	820	860
Yards Per Play	6.1	6.1
Yards Per Game	455.4	473.1
Rushing Attempts-Yards	397-1607	480-2509
Yards Per Attempt	4.0	5.2
Yards Per Game	146.1	228.1
Pass Att.-Comp.-Int.	423-265-14	380-219-8
Passing Yards	3402	2695
Yards Per Completion	12.8	12.3
Yards Per Game	309.3	245.0
Punting: No.-Avg.	46-40.8	48-40.8
Fumbles-Lost	16-11	15-3
Penalties-Yards	67-532	66-532
Sacks By-Yds. Lost	13-94	17-110
Third-Down Conversions	71-160	81-165
Conversion Pct.	44.4	49.1
Fourth-Down Conversions	12-19	8-12
Conversion Pct.	63.2	66.7
Avg. Time Of Possession	29:32	30:28

Scoring	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	OT	TOT
Nebraska	62	102	87	99	0	350
Opponents	84	112	111	83	0	390

2007 Results, Schedule

1	Sept. 1	Nevada (5-4), W 52-10	1-0
2	Sept. 8	@Wake Forest (6-4), W 20-17	2-0
3	Sept. 15	USC (8-2), L 49-31	2-1
4	Sept. 22	Ball State (5-5), W 41-40	3-1
5	Sept. 29	Iowa State (3-8), W 35-17	4-1
6	Oct. 6	@Missouri (9-1), L 41-6	4-2
7	Oct. 13	Oklahoma St. (5-5), L 45-14	4-3
8	Oct. 20	Texas A&M (6-5), L 36-14	4-4
9	Oct. 27	@Texas (9-2), L 28-25	4-5
10	Nov. 3	@Kansas (10-0), L 76-39	4-6
11	Nov. 10	Kansas State (5-5), W 73-31	5-6
12	Nov. 23	@Colorado (5-6), 11 a.m., ABC	

Scouting Report

Game 12

At Colorado
Nov. 23

Location: Boulder, Colo.
Enrollment: 28,624
2007 record: 5-6
Coach: Dan Hawkins, 2nd year
Series: Nebraska leads 46-17-2

11 a.m., ABC
Folsom Field, Boulder, Colo.

Quick Facts

Colorado blew a 21-0 halftime lead and fell to Iowa State 31-28, when a controversial ruling disallowed a last-second field goal in Ames.

Redshirt freshman quarterback Cody Hawkins, the coach's son, has passed for 2,452 yards, the sixth highest single-season total in CU history.

The Buffs were missing two starting defensive back in the loss to ISU. Junior safety Ryan Walters and senior cornerback Terrence Wheatley are both listed as day-to-day.

Buffalo to Watch

Senior inside linebacker Jordon Dizon was named one of 10 semifinalists for the Dick Butkus Award, presented annually to the nation's best linebacker. A preseason All-Big 12 pick by several publications, Dizon has 131 tackles, including four sacks, 11 tackles for loss and 18 third-down stops, tying a school record.

Big 12 At A Glance

	North W	North L	W	L
Kansas	6	0	10	0
Missouri	5	1	9	1
Kansas State	3	4	5	5
Colorado	3	4	5	6
Nebraska	2	5	5	6
Iowa State	2	5	3	8
	South W	**L**	**W**	**L**
Oklahoma	5	1	9	1
Texas	5	2	9	2
Oklahoma State	3	3	5	5
Texas Tech	3	4	7	4
Texas A&M	3	4	6	5
Baylor	0	7	3	8

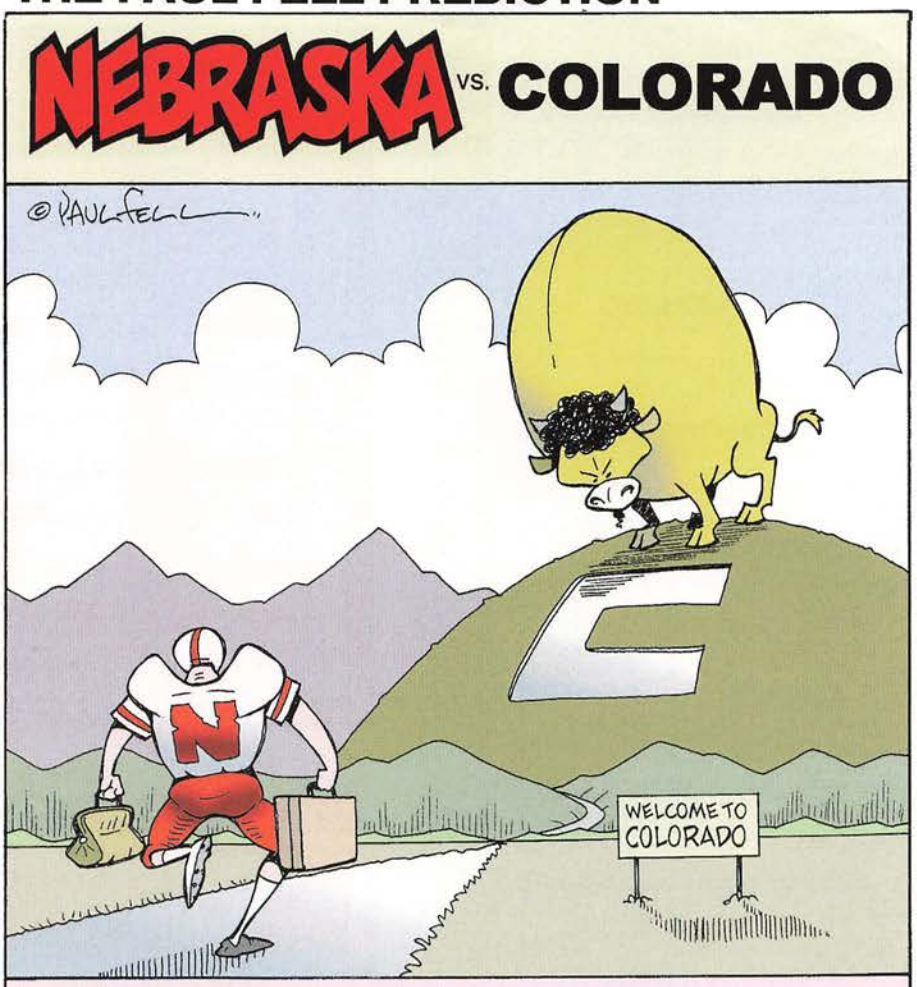
Saturday, Nov. 10
Nebraska 73, Kansas State 31
Iowa State 31, Colorado 28
Kansas 43, Oklahoma State 28
Missouri 40, Texas A&M 26
Texas 59, Texas Tech 43
Oklahoma 52, Baylor 21

Saturday, Nov. 17
Missouri at Kansas State
Iowa State at Kansas
Oklahoma State at Baylor
Oklahoma at Texas Tech

Friday, Nov. 23
Nebraska at Colorado
Texas at Texas A&M

Saturday, Nov. 24
Kansas State at Fresno State
Missouri vs. Kansas (Kansas City)
Oklahoma State at Oklahoma

THE PAUL FELL PREDICTION



NOVEMBER 23, 2007

HUSKERS FACE FORMIDABLE CHALLENGE IN VISITING FRIENDLY CONFINES OF FOLSOM FIELD TO FACE RALPHIE AND COMPANY!

TENTATIVE 2-DEEPS

NEBRASKA OFFENSE

WR	16	Maurice Purify*	6-4	220	Sr.
	87	Nate Swift**	6-2	200	Jr.
LT	77	Carl Nicks*	6-5	330	Sr.
	65	Mike Smith	6-6	285	RFr.
LG	57	Jacob Hickman*	6-4	285	So.
	68	Keith Williams	6-5	310	RFr.
C	59	Brett Byford*	6-3	300	Sr.
	69	Jordan Picou	6-2	305	Sr.
RG	70	Matt Slauson**	6-5	335	Jr.
	73	D.J. Jones	6-5	310	RFr.
RT	72	Jaivorio Burkes	6-5	315	Fr.
	65	Mike Smith	6-6	285	RFr.
HB	86	Sean Hill	6-3	250	Sr.
	85	J.B. Phillips***	6-3	245	Sr.
WR	83	Terrence Nunn***	6-0	190	Sr.
	7	Frantz Hardy**	6-1	190	Sr.
QB	12	Joe Ganz*	6-1	200	Jr.
	2	Patrick Witt	6-4	220	Fr.
FB	36	Thomas Lawson*	6-0	240	Jr.
	48	Andy Sand	6-2	230	Sr.
IB	5	Marlon Lucky**	6-0	210	Jr.
	19	Quentin Castille	6-1	245	Fr.
PK	90	Alex Henery	6-2	170	RFr.

NEBRASKA DEFENSE

DE	99	Barry Turner**	6-3	270	Jr.
	88	Clayton Sievers**	6-4	245	Jr.
NT	93	Ndamukong Suh*	6-4	305	So.
	56	Shukree Barfield	6-4	310	Jr.
DT	43	Ty Steinkuhler**	6-3	285	Jr.
	97	Kevin Dixon	6-3	295	Jr.
DE	98	Zach Potter**	6-7	280	Jr.
	95	Pierre Allen	6-5	265	RFr.
SLB	51	Bo Ruud***	6-3	235	Sr.
	53	Tyler Wortman	6-3	230	Jr.
MLB	13	Corey McKeon**	6-1	225	Sr.
	52	Phillip Dillard*	6-1	250	So.
WLB	15	Steve Octavien*	6-0	240	Sr.
	6	Major Culbert*	6-0	210	So.
LCB	5	Armando Murillo	6-0	195	Jr.
	25	Andre Jones*	6-0	190	Sr.
FS	30	Tierre Green***	6-1	200	Sr.
	3	Rickey Thenarse*	6-0	190	So.
SS	4	Larry Asante	6-1	210	So.
	9	Bryan Wilson*	6-1	205	Sr.
RCB	1	Zack Bowman*	6-2	200	Sr.
	2	Cortney Grixby***	5-9	170	Sr.
P	97	Dan Titchener*	6-0	200	Jr.

COLORADO OFFENSE

WRX	4	Patrick Williams**	6-2	200	Jr.
	9	Josh Smith	6-0	180	Fr.
LT	77	Tyler Polumbus***	6-8	300	Sr.
	73	Ryan Miller	6-7	320	Fr.
LG	51	Kai Maiava	6-0	295	Fr.
	65	Wes Palazzi	6-1	295	RFr.
C	75	Daniel Sanders**	6-3	310	Jr.
	51	Kai Maiava	6-0	295	Fr.
RG	76	Edwin Harrison***	6-4	300	Sr.
	72	Devin Head*	6-4	295	So.
RT	73	Ryan Miller	6-7	320	Fr.
	76	Edwin Harrison***	6-4	300	Sr.
TE	87	Riar Geer*	6-3	255	So.
	84	Tyson DeVree*	6-5	245	Sr.
WRZ	21	Scotty McKnight	5-10	190	RFr.
	83	Dusty Sprague***	6-4	190	Sr.
QB	7	Cody Hawkins	5-11	190	RFr.
	3	Rick Nelson	6-1	230	Jr.
FB	41	Jake Behrens	6-0	230	So.
	43	Samson Jagoras*	5-10	220	Sr.
TB	2	Hugh Charles***	5-8	190	Sr.
	8	Demetrius Sumler	5-10	215	RFr.
PK	39	Kevin Eberhart*	5-11	195	Sr.

COLORADO DEFENSE

LE	91	Maurice Lucas**	6-4	260	Jr.
	90	Marquez Herrod	6-2	255	RFr.
DT	86	George Hypolite**	6-1	285	Jr.
	78	Jason Brace*	6-4	265	So.
NT	94	Brandon Nicolas*	6-3	290	Jr.
	99	Chris Perri	6-3	270	So.
RE	47	Alonzo Barrett***	6-3	235	Sr.
	99	Chris Perri	6-3	270	So.
SLB	40	Brad Jones**	6-3	225	Jr.
	35	Nate Vaiomounga	5-10	195	Fr.
MLB	45	Jeff Smart*	5-11	210	So.
	57	Jake Duren	5-11	230	So.
WLB	44	Jordon Dizon***	6-0	220	Sr.
	52	Bryan Stengel	6-2	215	So.
LCB	26	Terrence Wheatley***	5-10	175	Sr.
	6	Gardner McKay**	5-11	160	Jr.
FS	15	Ryan Walters**	5-11	200	Jr.
	23	Jalil Brown	6-1	205	RFr.
SS	9	Daniel Dykes	6-2	210	Jr.
	25	Lionel Harris**	6-0	195	Sr.
RCB	42	Benjamin Burney**	5-11	190	Jr.
	29	Cha'pelle Brown*	5-7	175	So.
P	14	Matt DiLallo*	6-1	200	So.

PICKS

Nov. 22-24

Brian Hill
Editor

Mike Babcock
Cont. Editor

Terry Douglass
G.I. Independent

Sean Callahan
KFAB/Rivals.com

Dave Webber
WOWT-Omaha
(Guest)

	Brian Hill	Mike Babcock	Terry Douglass	Sean Callahan	Dave Webber
Nebraska @Colorado	Nebraska 34, Colorado 33	Nebraska 45, Colorado 42	Colorado 44, Nebraska 35	Colorado 34, Nebraska 20	Nebraska 28, Colorado 21
Missouri vs. Kansas (KC)	Kansas 31, Missouri 28	Missouri 28, Kansas 27	Missouri 37, Kansas 24	Kansas 37, Missouri 35	Kansas 24, Missouri 21
Oklahoma State @Oklahoma	Oklahoma 27, Okla. St. 24	Oklahoma 49, Okla. St. 31	Oklahoma 28, Okla. St. 13	Oklahoma 31, Okla. St. 17	Oklahoma 42 Okla. St. 21
Alabama @Auburn	Auburn 20, Alabama 17	Auburn 21, Alabama 10	Auburn 6, Alabama 3	Auburn 17, Alabama 13	Alabama 21, Auburn 20
Last Week	2-2	2-2	0-4	2-2	2-2
Season	23-21	28-16	27-17	31-13	27-17

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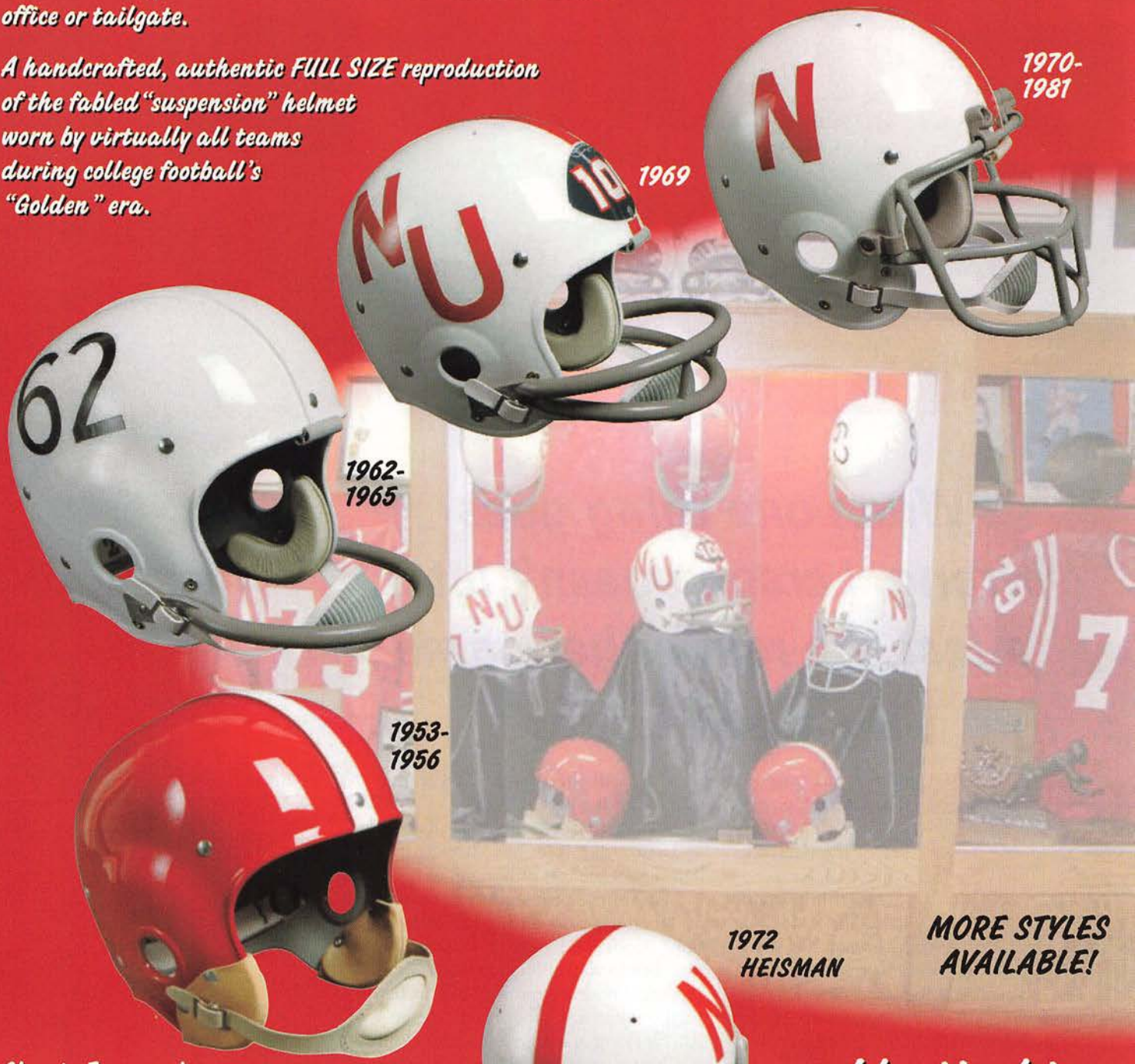

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Multiple Talents

When one thing goes wrong, Larson doesn't let it affect the rest of her game

By Bob Hamar

There is no question that Jordan Larson is an important member of the Nebraska volleyball team.

How important? Just take a look at the matches where Larson has struggled during her career.

There aren't many. One was the 2005 NCAA championship match against Washington. Another was Oct. 24 at Texas.

Both those matches were 3-0 losses for the Huskers.

"She's a key player on this team," Nebraska coach John Cook said. "We need her to be at her best. My job is to help her get back there."

Yes, Larson — along with the Husker team — was going through a bit of a slump in late October and into early November. Larson saw her hitting percentage drop from well over .300 all the way to .268 at one point after the loss to Texas.

But — and Cook said this is the key — Larson didn't let her hitting problems affect the rest of her game.

"Part of the problem is we have to do a better job of getting her in position," Cook said. "We're working on that. But Jordan still leads the team in serving. We score more points in her rotation than any other rotation. She's still blocking at a high level. She's still our best passer, so she's still doing a lot of good things to help our team be successful. It's just that hitting . . . sometimes players go through slumps like that."

Cook said Larson can win matches with serving, hitting, blocking and passing. The only volleyball skill she can't win matches with is setting.

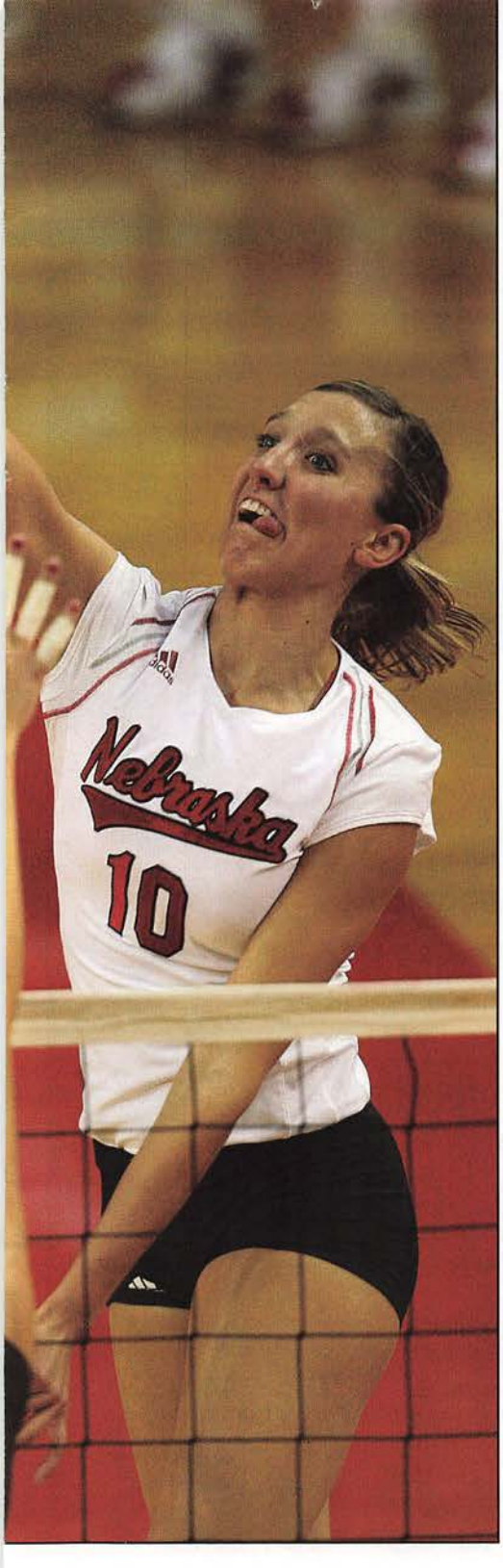
Larson understands how important her all-around play is to the Husker team.

Scott Bruhn

Nebraska junior outside hitter Jordan Larson passed the 1,000-kill plateau for her career with a season-high 17 kills and 16 digs against Missouri on Oct. 31.

"My hitting wasn't as good as it should have been, but I passed, I had aces, I had digs," Larson said. "What's important to me is the fact that I still picked things up on that end."

Larson's teammate Sarah Pavan understands what she was going



through. It's just the nature of the sport.

"Volleyball is a game of mistakes, so you can't expect to be flawless," Pavan said. "People aren't going to play amazingly every night whether you're the so-called 'star' player or not. I think the thing that's important is if you are struggling, you're still working to do your job. You're not dwelling on your mistakes. You're not feeling sorry for yourself. Sometimes you're going to have a bad night."

Larson now understands that, and she also understands the importance of the mental part of the game.

"I expect more out of myself," Larson said. "The key thing for me is when I was a freshman, if one thing went wrong for me, I went in the tank. I mean I was in the tank. Nothing would go right. I was passing the ball everywhere."

Now when something goes wrong — like a hitting slump — Larson doesn't let it affect the rest of her game.

"Now she's matured to where if she's having a poor night hitting, she still is doing a lot of great things," Cook said. "There have been matches where she's had more jump serve attempts than she has attacking attempts. That's how good her serves have been stressing other teams."

Larson is known to have one of the toughest jump serves around. As of the first of November, Larson was just behind Pavan for the team lead in ace serves per game. She also has moved into fourth on the all-time list for aces in a career and should break Val Novak's career mark set from 1987 to 1990.

Larson also passed the 1,000 mark for career kills this season and could move into the top five-all time before she is done. She is also approaching the 1,000 dig mark for her career and could challenge Jennifer Saleaumua's school record next season.

None of this surprises Cook. When he was asked before her freshman season what Larson was good at on the court, he said simply, "Everything."

Now Larson is older, stronger and more mature. Her physical improvement mirrored what Christina Houghtelling and Pavan went through.

"Jordan has taken her game to another level, and it was something that we saw during the spring," Cook said. "She's had the full year of working in our strength and conditioning program, and her progress is similar to what Christina's was two years ago and Sarah's last season. Jordan is already a great all-around player, but I think we are just starting to see Jordan's potential."

We may see more of that potential after Larson finishes her college career. She got a taste of beach volleyball last summer when she teamed with Pavan to win the Collegiate Beach Nationals this past April in San Diego.

Larson said she enjoyed the beach volleyball experience.

"It's just a little different style," Larson said. "It was a little different kind of athletes. It was a lot more fun, pretty laid back. We just wanted to go out there and win.

"People were shocked that we were from Nebraska and won. It was just a great experience for us to win." ■

***Bob Hamar** covers the Nebraska volleyball team for the Grand Island (Neb.) Independent. He can be reached at bob.hamar@theindependent.com*

Results, Schedule

AVCA Showcase
At Qwest Center Omaha

Aug. 24	vs. Tennessee	W 3-0
Aug. 25	vs. UCLA	W 3-1

Holiday Inn Classic
NU Coliseum/Qwest Center Omaha

Aug. 31	vs. Creighton (NU)	W 3-0
Sept. 2	vs. Penn St. (Omaha)	W 3-0
Sept. 3	vs. Cal Poly (NU)	W 3-0

Ameritas Players Challenge
NU Coliseum

Sept. 7	vs. Duke	W 3-0
Sept. 8	vs. New Mexico St.	W 3-0

(Home matches at NU Coliseum, unless noted)

Sept. 12	Texas	W 3-0
Sept. 15	@Texas Tech	W 3-0
Sept. 22	Texas A&M	W 3-0
Sept. 26	@Kansas	W 3-0
Sept. 29	Baylor	W 3-0
Oct. 3	Kansas State	W 3-0
Oct. 6	@Colorado	W 3-0
Oct. 10	Iowa State	W 3-0
Oct. 13	@Oklahoma	W 3-0
Oct. 17	@Missouri	W 3-0
Oct. 20	Kansas	W 3-0
Oct. 21	Hawaii (Devaney)	W 3-0
Oct. 24	@Texas	L 3-0
Oct. 31	Missouri	W 3-2
Nov. 3	@Kansas State	W 3-2
Nov. 7	Colorado	W 3-0
Nov. 11	@Iowa State	4 p.m.
Nov. 14	@Texas A&M	5:30 p.m.
Nov. 17	Oklahoma	7 p.m.
Nov. 21	@Baylor	6:30 p.m.
Nov. 24	Texas Tech	7 p.m.

Nov. 29-Dec. 2
NCAA First/Second Rounds
At Campus Sites

Dec. 7-8
NCAA Regionals
At Campus Sites

Dec 13-15
NCAA Final Four
At Sacramento, Calif.

Scott Bruhn

Forward Kelsey Griffin (left), NU's only player with starting experience, had nine points and five rebounds in the exhibition opener.

'Inexperienced'

Connie Yori

Danielle Page

Kelsey Griffin is the only player on the Nebraska women's basketball team to have started. She's a junior and first-team All-Big 12 honoree. Danielle Page is the team's only senior.

"So we're extremely inexperienced," coach Connie Yori said.

Even so, "I like our team," said Yori. "We're going to have to find a way to compensate (for) lack of experience. We can't control that. But there are certain things we can control."

Chemistry for one. Attention to detail for another, though that's "still a ways off," Yori said. "But it's something our players want to be great at. We have competitive kids in our program."

Except for Griffin, Page and Tay Hester, a junior college transfer, those

kids are freshmen and sophomores. Six of the players are new to the team, Hester and five freshmen.

Despite the youthful inexperience, Yori's sixth Nebraska team might be her most talented. Even though the Huskers finished 22-10 last season and advanced to post-season play for a fourth consecutive time, playing in the NCAA Tournament for the first time since 1999-2000, "I feel like we'll put a better team on the floor this year than we have had at any point," said Yori. "Whether we can win close games and the experience factors in those situations . . . but the talent level, we're in pretty good shape."

Because of the young players and the fact that Page is the only senior, "I'm looking at this in a lot of ways as a two-year deal," Yori said. "I want to give our young players, really, a taste of difficult basketball, challenging basketball, early on so that they can grow."

The Huskers, who were to open against Texas-El Paso on Nov. 9 and then play Mississippi two days later, with both games at the Devaney Sports Center, have a challenging schedule.

The nonconference portion could be the most difficult in school history, according to Yori. Seven of 14 nonconference opponents won at least 20 games last season, including NCAA Elite Eight qualifier Mississippi and Sweet 16 qualifier Marist, as well as Big Ten champion Ohio State.

In addition, four Big 12 teams were ranked in the USA Today/ESPN coaches' preseason Top 25, released on Oct. 31. So the schedule is "just enormously difficult," said Yori.

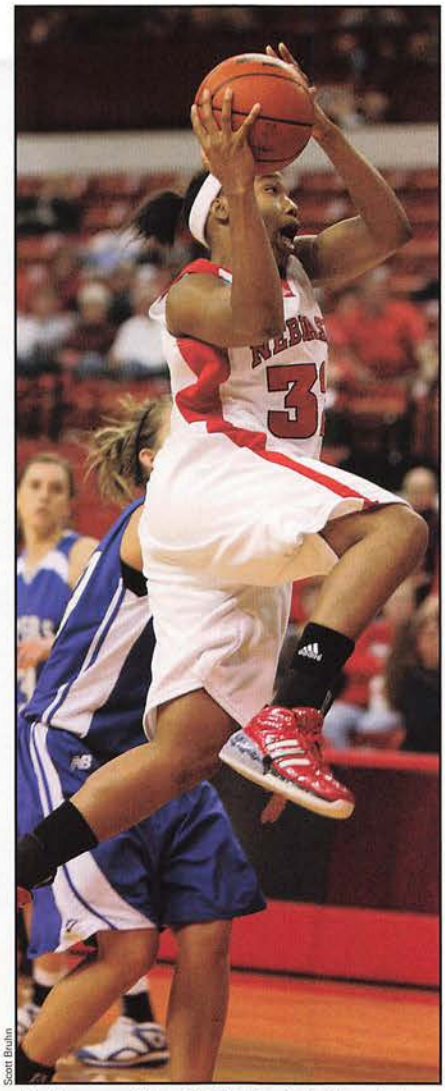
"Hopefully, our kids will understand the competition level. There's no question that it's a balancing act. I hope I haven't set our players up for failure. But I think we have tough enough kids."

They should be able to "respond to good times and bad," she said.

WHO'S STARTING

During preseason practice, Griffin, Page and sophomore Cory Montgomery, all listed at 6-foot-2, "set themselves apart to a certain extent" as post players, according to Yori.

Her biggest concern has been replacing guard Kiera Hardy, who finished as the fourth-leading scorer in school history with 1,930 points. "If you



Scott Bruhn

Junior guard Tay Hester had eight points and five rebounds in the first exhibition game against Nebraska-Kearney.

were to ask me last year after the season who our leading returning guard was, I'd probably say Vonnie Turner would have to pick up some of the scoring slack and do a little bit more for us," Yori said before the first exhibition. "But what's been really exciting is that we have three or four guards that have actually played, overall, better than her up to this stage."

Those guards were Hester, sophomore Nicole Neals and freshmen Kaitlyn Burke and Dominique Kelley. "We're going to have good guards," said Yori. "We're just not experienced." Hester, who transferred from Mt. San Antonio College after beginning her college career at Texas-El Paso, is "extremely explosive, (and) can shoot the perimeter shot," Yori said.

"She's got a chance to be a great player for us."

SHE'S A PLAYER

The 5-foot-7 Kelley will play multiple roles this season. "People have asked me, 'Where are you going to play her? What does she do? What position is she?'" said Yori. "She's a player.

"She knows how to play the game, and whatever position you put her in, wherever you put her on the floor, she has a great feel for the game, great understanding. She plays her tail off. Her ability to pressure the ball is something we have not had, really, at any juncture since I've been here. She's a great on-the-ball defender. She's going to help us tremendously. She's a great motion player; we're a motion team.

Dominique Kelley

"She's got mental toughness. She works hard. She's got a lot of things going for a freshman."

OTHERS RECEIVING VOTES

Yori's team received seven votes in the USA Today/ESPN coaches' pre-season poll. Defending NCAA champion Tennessee was atop the poll, with 26 first-place votes. Connecticut was second, with four first-place votes, followed by Rutgers, Maryland and LSU, which received the other first-place vote.

Big 12 teams in the Top 25 were:

WOMEN'S SCHEDULE

(HOME GAMES AT DEVANEY CENTER)

Nov. 1	*Nebraska-Kearney, W 62-48
Nov. 5	*Nebraska-Omaha, W 78-50
Nov. 9	UTEP
Nov. 11	Mississippi
Nov. 17	Florida
Nov. 23	**Marist
Nov. 24	**Utah
Nov. 25	**Akron
Nov. 30	Creighton
Dec. 2	Robert Morris
Dec. 8	USC
Dec. 13	@Cal State Bakersfield
Dec. 15	@Long Beach State
Dec. 22	@Ohio State
Dec. 30	Denver
Jan. 2	Arkansas-Pine Bluff
Jan. 9	Texas
Jan. 12	Kansas (FSN)
Jan. 16	@Oklahoma (Sooner Network)
Jan. 19	@Iowa State
Jan. 23	Texas A&M (FSN Midwest)
Jan. 26	@Baylor
Jan. 30	Kansas State
Feb. 3	@Missouri (FSN)
Feb. 6	@Colorado (FSNRM)
Feb. 10	Oklahoma State (ESPN2)
Feb. 17	@Kansas (ESPN360/Sunflower)
Feb. 21	Missouri (FSN Midwest)
Feb. 24	@Texas Tech
Feb. 27	@Kansas State (FSN Midwest)
Mar. 2	Colorado
Mar. 5	Iowa State
Mar. 11-15	Big 12 Championship, Kansas City

*Exhibition
**Oahu Classic

Scott Bruhn

Junior college transfer Ade Dagunduro led the Huskers in scoring (16) and rebounds (nine) in the second exhibition game.

Oklahoma (6), Texas A&M (11), Baylor (15) and Texas (24). Oklahoma State (16), Iowa State (6) and Texas Tech (3), like Nebraska, also received votes.

EXHIBITION SUCCESS

The Husker women won exhibition games against Nebraska-Kearney, 62-48, and Nebraska-Omaha, 78-50. Coach Doc Sadler's men's team won exhibition games against Nebraska Wesleyan, 70-50, and Wayne State, 74-51. The men's team also is inexperienced with eight new scholarship players and only one returning player with more than one season of Division I experience, senior Aleks Maric.

The men were scheduled to open their season against Presbyterian at the Devaney Sports Center on the night of the Kansas State football game.

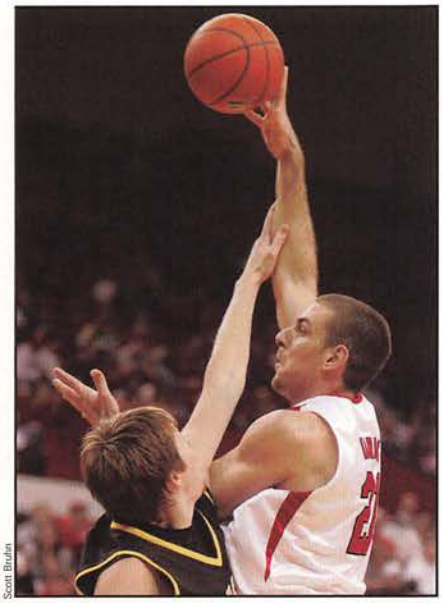
INTERNATIONAL FLAVOR

Even though his home is Sydney, Australia, Maric has never considered himself an outsider at Nebraska. "Basketball, it's an international game. It's played all over the world, so I don't look at myself as an Australian in America, playing a game," he said. "I look at myself as a player, playing a game and enjoying doing it. I never look at myself as an outsider, insider or whatever."

Sophomore Chris Balham was born in France and grew up there, while newcomer Shang Ping is from Haerbin, China, by way of Avondal High School in New Zealand and Illinois Central College. The 6-foot-10 Ping is believed to be one of only three Chinese players in NCAA Division I this season.

The others are 7-2 Max Zhang at California and 6-10 Ji Xiang at Hawaii. Both are freshmen.

"You need some international flavor to make the recipe better," said Maric, whose parents are from Serbia. ■



Scott Bruhn

Aleks Maric was a second-team All-Big 12 selection last season as a junior.

Scott Bruhn

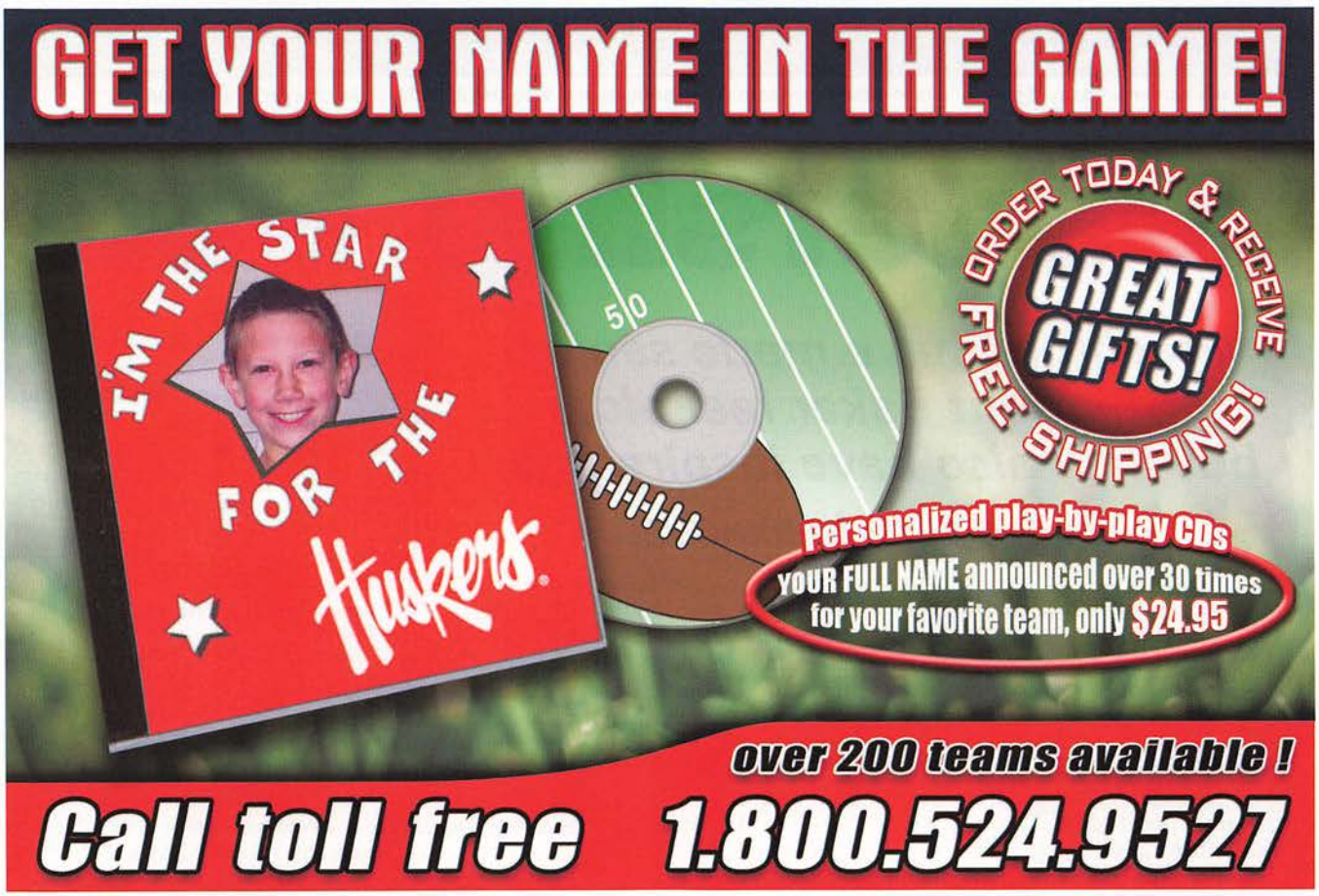
Doc Sadler's second Nebraska team includes eight newcomers.

Men's Schedule

(HOME GAMES AT DEVANEY CENTER, UNLESS NOTED)

Nov. 2	*Nebraska Wesleyan, W 70-50
Nov. 6	*Wayne State, W 74-51
Nov. 10	Presbyterian College
Nov. 17	Alabama A&M
Nov. 20	Norfolk State
Nov. 24	@Creighton
Nov. 26	IPFW
Dec. 2	Arizona State (ESPNU)
Dec. 5	@Western Kentucky (FSN Midwest)
Dec. 9	Rutgers FSN Midwest)
Dec. 11	Savannah State
Dec. 15	Oregon (Qwest Center, Omaha)
Dec. 22	North Carolina Central
Dec. 29	Alcorn State
Jan. 4	Maryland-Eastern Shore
Jan. 12	Kansas (ESPN)
Jan. 15	@Colorado (FSN Midwest)
Jan. 19	Baylor (ESPN+)
Jan. 26	@Kansas (ESPN+)
Jan. 30	@Missouri (FSN Midwest)
Feb. 2	Iowa State (ESPN+)
Feb. 6	@Kansas State (FSN Midwest)
Feb. 9	Texas Tech (ESPN+)
Feb. 13	Missouri
Feb. 16	@Iowa State (ESPN+)
Feb. 20	Kansas State (ESPN2)
Feb. 23	@Texas A&M (ESPN+)
Feb. 27	Oklahoma
Mar. 1	@Oklahoma State (ESPN+)
Mar. 4	@Texas (FSN Midwest)
Mar. 9	Colorado (FSN Midwest)
Mar. 13-16	Big 12 Championship, Kansas City (ESPN+)

*Exhibition



Scott Bruhn

Nebraska senior Lindsay Baker is a two-time first-team All-American and was the 2006 National Player of the Year.

Leadership Role

Freshmen have made senior standout Baker feel old, but they also have inspired her

By Katelyn Kerkhove

Lindsay Baker feels old this year, older than she is.

While she is just 21-years old, chronologically, she is the only senior on the Nebraska bowling team this season. And she is learning what it's like to be a leader, to have others depend on her and to make sure her personal performances don't distract from her duties as team captain.

Baker was the only freshman when she became a Cornhusker in 2004. Now that she is the lone senior, she is responsible for taking care of seven freshmen — a change Nebraska coach Bill Straub is hoping she can handle.

"It goes against the norm for her to be reasonable for people other than herself," Straub said. "So far, she is making each of them feel welcome. She's the den mother and doing an admirable job."

Independent by nature, Baker has found numerous successes on the lanes. Straub knew that. But he was concerned about how she would handle her new role.

Baker, the 2006 National Player of the Year, has never been afraid to compete on her own, under the microscope, but she has also never been forced into a role that makes her a bigger factor in sustaining the team's morale, in creating chemistry.

"It's not like I thought this year was going to be awful or anything; it's just that I didn't know how it was going to be because I had always had people older than me," Baker said. "Now, I'm older by two, three, four years.

"I really do like this year. I think there is a reason for this. I feel like this is where I'm supposed to be."

Straub said Baker's willingness to

work with the freshmen in all aspects of their lives also has impressed him. With her talents, there's no doubt she is the best bowler in the nation, he said, but that hasn't seemed to make her unwilling to help the younger players.

"She has organized get-togethers away from bowling to help those from out of state," Straub said. "And while she's at practice — when we make a direction and the freshmen are hesitant to ask us what we want — she steps in to help them."

As for Baker's talents as a bowler, Straub said her fundamentals have only improved since she came to Nebraska.

A native of Amherst, N Y., Baker was a highly decorated recruit when she arrived in Lincoln. She broke every New York State Bowling Association individual high school record, and she was the only person to bowl a 300 in competition. She also earned NYSBA All-State honors for four years as well as the state's player-of-the-year award as a senior.

Her freshman year at Nebraska, she was named to the NCAA all-tournament team with a career-high average of 234. She also was named the NCAA Rookie of the Year.

In her junior season with the Huskers, she notched three top-five finishes and finished 17th in the national championships.

But Straub wouldn't say he was counting on a national championship finish for Baker this year, even though he knows it's possible.

"She's had plenty of time under the microscope," Straub said. "She had a good idea about fundamentals but has improved on that since coming to Lincoln. I see her at the beginning of the season (as the best), but I can't predict the future."

For Baker, this season has already been a new experience. She said the freshmen on the team have made her feel old, but they also have inspired her. They've asked her about the NCAA championship tournament, about what it feels like to be the best, and she has brought her national championship ring to practice to show them, as a reminder of what can be accomplished.

With growing support for a professional women's bowling league around the nation, through competition and journalism, Baker said this season could serve as a great stepping stone to life back in New York.

But right now, her only focus is on her team.

"I'm excited to be around them," she said of her teammates. "Sometimes, I feel really old, I do. But they probably feel young.

"It's really enjoyable to come to practice and work with people who want to be better and who want to win."

ROSTER

Seniors — Lindsay Baker (Amherst, N.Y.)

Junior — Emma-Louis Butchard (Scotland), Kaleena Henning (North Platte, Neb.)

Sophomore — Cassandra Leuthold (Black Hawk, S.D.)

Freshmen — Christine Bator (Warren, Mich.), Esther Cheah (Malaysia), Jasmine Laugerman (Brooklyn Center, Minn.), Kayla Rhoades (LaFayette, Ind.), Katie Ann Sopp (Circle Pines, Minn.), Breanna Stewart (Louisville, Ky), Kayla Stram (Grand Rapids, Minn.)

REMAINING SCHEDULE

Nov. 15-17 — Maverick Challenge at Chicago, Ill.

Dec. 1-2 — Capital City Collegiate Classic at Jackson, Miss.

Jan. 18-20 — Ozark Invitational at Springfield, Mo.

Feb. 1-3 — Mid-Winter Classic at Jonesboro, Ark.

Feb. 15-17 — Morgan State Invitational at Baltimore, Md.

Feb. 29-March 2 — Holiday Classic at Birmingham, Ala.

March 14-16 — Music City Classic at Nashville, Tenn.

March 20-22 — Brunswick Windy City Classic at Chicago, Ill.

April 10-12 — NCAA Champ. ■

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WEST VIRGINIA - Blue & Gold News	30 issues	$34.95	304-291-2242
NEVADA-RENO - Wolfpack Edge	12 issues	$37.50	775-787-3343

Touchdown Club Turns 50

Bill Jennings was in his first season as head football coach at Nebraska. He had replaced Pete Elliott, who had left for California after one season. Bill Orwig was athletic director.

The year was 1957. And The Touchdown Club of Nebraska was established "when a number of Cornhusker boosters asked for some approved plan which would permit them to provide support for the intercollegiate athletic program," an application form in the game-day program said.

The club "carries the approval of both the National Collegiate Athletic Association and the Big Eight Conference," the entry said. "All memberships are tax deductible."

Those interested in joining could contact Orwig at his office in the NU Coliseum.

In its 50th year, the Touchdown Club is looking to increase membership, which is "a little over 3,000," according to Al Domina, the organization's president since August. The Touchdown Club's mission is "very simple," he said. "It's to support the University of Nebraska athletic department."

Its primary functions are a banquet following letter-of-intent-signing day and a membership-drive activity during the spring in which members and prospective members attend a practice and have lunch with the coaches and players. Last spring, the first such event drew about 500 people, despite being held the day before Easter, the week before the Red-White game, and less than ideal weather.

The day was cold and rainy, and the practice was conducted indoors. Next spring, with better weather, Domina estimates drawing twice as many members and prospective members.

Domina became a member of the Touchdown Club in "about 1965."

The Randolph, Neb., native graduated from the university's medical school in Omaha in 1962 and served his internship in Lincoln. He joined the Extra Point Club first.

The Extra Point Club of Nebraska also was established in 1957 — late in the season.

An entry in the game program from Nebraska's 1958 home-opener against Penn Sate, described the Touchdown Club as the Extra Point Club's "big brother."

Annual membership in the Extra Point Club was $1, but "many upped this fee in view of the new rule which rewards a run or pass conversion with two points," the program entry said.

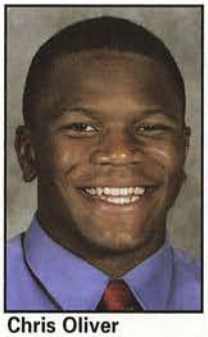
The Extra Point Club is still active, too, according to Domina.

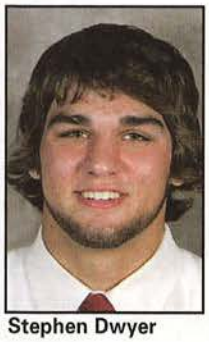
Oklahoma's Touchdown Club is 10 years old than Nebraska's, Domina said, and since Jennings had played and coached at Oklahoma, he might have encouraged the creation of one at Nebraska.

Oliver Wins Three Matches in Wrestle-Offs

Coach Mark Manning's Cornhusker wrestling team held its annual wrestle-offs at the Bob Devaney Sports Center indoor track in late October, in preparation for season-opening competition at Laramie, Wyo. Junior Chris Oliver (157), a NCAA qualifier last season, won three matches, pinning sophomore Rob Plambeck in 35 seconds and redshirted freshman Frank Jonas in 2:25 and then earning an 11-3 major decision over redshirted freshman Paul Sanders.

Sophomore Stephen Dwyer (165) won twice, with a 12-0 major decision over junior Cody Foust and a 4-1 decision over redshirted freshman Alex Ward.


Chris Oliver


Stephen Dwyer

ROSTER

125 pounds — *Paul Donahoe (Davison, Mich.), Jr.; Andrew Pokorny (Bennington, Neb.), Fr.; Dustin Weitzel (Dolores, Colo.), Fr.

133 — Kenny Jordan (Frankfort, Ill.), So.; Brian Litch (Wayzata, Minn.), Fr.; Peter Roto (Palatine, Ill.), RFr.; Matt Vacanti (Papillion, Neb.), RFr.

141 — Patrick Aleksanyan (Santa Ana, Calif.), Jr.; Austin Baier (Greenfield, Iowa), So.; Cash Coolidge (Omaha), Jr.; Casey Gubbels (Randolph, Neb.), RFr.; Jared Hensley (Bartlett, Ill.), Fr.; Mike Rowe (Huntington, Md.), So.; Curtis Salazar (Greeley, Colo.), RFr.; Robert Sanders (Blanding, Utah), Jr.

149 — Jordan Burroughs (Sicklerville, N.J.), So.; Chris Hacker (El Reno, Okla.), Fr.; Derek Moyer (Oskaloosa, Iowa), RFr.

157 — Frank Jonas (Wichita, Kan.), RFr.; Brett Landrum (Wayzata, Minn.), Fr.; *Chris Oliver (Omaha), Jr.; Rob Plambeck (Lincoln, Neb.), So.; Paul Sanders (Blanding, Utah), RFr.

165 — *Stephen Dwyer (Rockton, Ill.), So.; Cody Foust (Choctaw, Okla.), Jr.

174 — *Brandon Browne (Plattsmouth, Neb.), Jr.; Andy Johnson (Yankton, S.D.), RFr.; Alex Ward (Davidsonville, Md.), RFr.

184 — *Vince Jones (Sicklerville, N.J.), Jr.; Levi Wofford (Aurora, Neb.), So.

197 — *Craig Brester (Howells, Neb.), So.; Cameron Browne (Plattsmouth, Neb.), So.

285 — Tucker Lane (Redvale, Colo.), Fr.; *Jon May (Hutchinson, Minn.), Sr.

*Preseason ranking: Donahoe (No. 1). Brester (No. 5), May (No. 6), Jones (No. 9), Browne (No. 10), Burroughs (No. 11), Dwyer (No. 12), Oliver (No. 14)

REMAINING SCHEDULE

Nov. 16 — Lehigh
Nov. 17 — Kaufman-Brand Open, at Omaha, Neb.
Nov. 30-Dec. 1 — at Las Vegas Invitational, Las Vegas, Nev.
Dec. 6 — at Minnesota
Dec. 7 — at South Dakota Stat
Dec. 15 — Dana College
Jan. 2 — at Northern Colorado
Jan. 4 — at Oregon State
Jan. 12-13 — NWCA National Duals at Cedar Falls, Iowa
Jan. 20 — Oklahoma State at Oklahoma City, Okla.
Feb. 2 — Missouri
Feb. 10 — Oklahoma
Feb. 16 — at Rider
Feb. 17 — at Hofstra
Feb. 24 — at Iowa State
March 8 — Big 12 Championships at Stillwater, Okla.
March 20-22 — NCAA Championships at St. Louis, Mo.

Quick Hits

PAVAN HONORED

The Nebraska volleyball team had to scuffle to win back-to-back matches against Missouri (30-19, 32-34, 30-11, 24-30, 15-10) and at Kansas State (24-30, 27-30, 30-25, 30-19, 15-8), after being swept at Texas to drop out of the No. 1 ranking. As a result, the Cornhuskers dropped further behind Penn State in the CSTV/AVCA Coaches Top 25 Poll released on Nov. 5.

Penn State received 34 first-place votes to Nebraska's 16. Third-ranked Texas drew six first-place votes, and fourth-ranked Washington got the remaining four.

Stanford was fifth in the poll, followed by Southern California, California, Florida, UCLA and Hawaii. Other Big 12 teams in the top 25 were Kansas State (12) and Oklahoma (23).

Sarah Pavan was named the Big 12 offensive player of the week for her efforts against Missouri and Kansas State. In the two matches, she averaged 5.95 points, 5.30 kills and 2.40 digs. She had double-doubles in both and hit .363 as the Huskers moved into a tie with Texas for the Big 12 lead.

Sarah Pavan

The senior outside hitter was credited with 22 kills on a .349 hitting percentage with 14 digs, three aces and two blocks against Missouri. Three days later against Kansas State, her statistics were even more impressive: 31 kills, .375 hitting percentage and 10 digs.

The 31 kills were the second-highest total in the rally-scoring era and the most by a Husker in a regular-season match since 1999. It was the seventh time during her career that Pavan, a two-time Big 12 player of the year, has been named conference offensive player of the week.

It was her second offensive-player-of-the-week award this season.

Jordan Larson had 17 kills and 16 digs for her ninth double-double of the season against Missouri.

GOOD WORKS TEAM

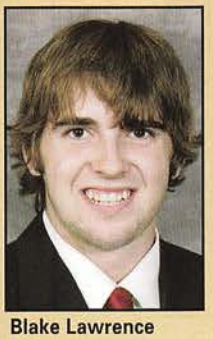
Husker volleyball player Amanda Gates, a junior from Columbus, Neb., was among 12 conference student-athletes selected to the Big 12 Fall Sports Good Works team.

Amanda Gates

A two-year letter-winner and the top back-up at middle blocker, Gates has coordinated food and clothing drives, spoken to school groups and visited nursing homes and hospitals. She also is a third-team Academic All-District VII honoree, with a 4.0 cumulative grade-point average.

NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL SCHOLAR-ATHLETE

Cornhusker freshman football player Blake Lawrence was among five athletes named National Football Foundation and College Football Hall of Fame High School Scholar-Athletes for 2007, announced in early November. Lawrence represented the Midwest Region.


Blake Lawrence

Lawrence led Shawnee Mission West to the Kansas 6A title as a senior, playing safety and linebacker on defense and quarterback on offense. He was the state's Gatorade Player of the Year.

He has played at Nebraska as a true freshman, primarily on special teams. With injuries at linebacker, he moved into the rotation, only to be sidelined by injury.

Lawrence has worn a No. 12 jersey this season. "There aren't too many linebackers out there with No. 12," he said. "But it was the number I had growing up."

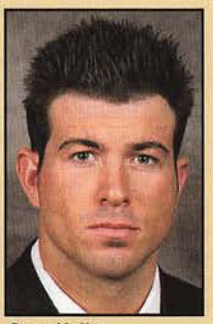
He wore No. 1 in high school, however. When he got to Nebraska, he decided to "try something a little different," he said. "We'll see how long 12 sticks. There could be a time where I need to switch up to a linebacker number and get more of a face on the linebacker side."

On the other hand, he could make No. 12 "something that someone respects and understands that 12 can be a linebacker's number. Hopefully, 12 will mean something some day," he said.

Cornhusker All-Americans Jarvis Redwine, Bobby Reynolds and Dave Humm have won No. 12 jerseys. All of them, of course, were offensive players.

NFL FUTURE

Sam Keller's career at Nebraska might be over, but his goal of playing in the NFL remains intact. "I think he's got an outstanding shot to do some things," coach Bill Callahan said. "He has a great opportunity to continue to develop and become a quarterback in the National Football League.


Sam Keller

"I think he's got that type of talent. He has the arm to do that."

Callahan was asked how a late-season injury such as the one that sidelined Keller would affect his draft status. "It just depends on what you're looking for and where you're picking and where you want to take a guy," said Callahan. "The great thing about this is it's his non-throwing shoulder.

Keller suffered a broken collarbone, on the left side. "That's the real positive in that respect," Callahan said. "Just going through the healing process and seeing how he comes around to where he's able to go back out and train, throw and work out for people, I think that will be a major (criterion)."

Keller played in nine games, completing 205-of-325 passes (63.1 percent) for 2,422 yards and 14 touchdowns with 10 interceptions. The yardage is the third most in school history.

WELCOME BACK, PAUL

Paul Meyers has returned to the Nebraska athletic department as associate athletic director for development. The former Cornhusker All-America baseball player and assistant baseball coach joined the athletic department as a development officer in 1994 and was named senior development officer and interim director of development in 1999. He resigned as associate athletic director for major gifts on Oct. 15. Interim Athletic Director Tom Osborne brought him back. "When Coach Osborne asked me to come back to the department, I was truly humbled," Meyers said in a prepared statement.

Paul Meyers

BRIEFLY

- The Husker soccer team played Iowa State to a 2-2 double-overtime draw in its final match of the season, to finish with a 5-10-4 record, including 1-8-1 in the Big 12.
- Nebraska's Hawks Field at Haymarket Park was selected as the 2007 Sports Turf Managers Association (STMA) Baseball Field of the Year in the college/university division. Josh Klute is the head groundskeeper, and Jared Hetzel and Jen Roeber are his assistants.
- Former Cornhusker wrestler Bill Scherr is among four finalists to serve as an assistant coach for the 2008 United States Olympic Team in women's freestyle wrestling. Scherr, an NCAA champion at Nebraska in 1984, is a vice president with Goldman Sachs & Co. in Chicago. ■

CROSSWORD

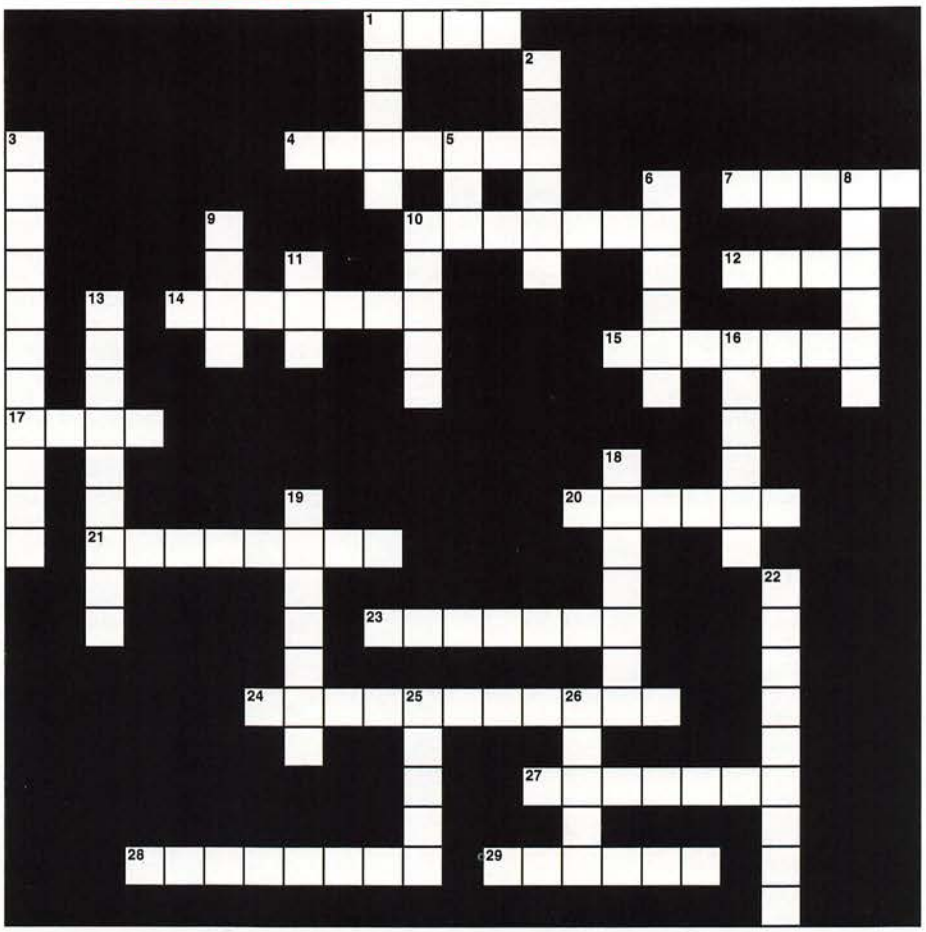
ACROSS

1 Colorado color
4 Wears No. 81
7 Zach Potter's hometown
10 Turner Gill's current school
12 Wide receiver from Texas
14 Brett Byford's home state
15 Colorado campus location
17 Wears No. 61
20 NU assistant who coached at Colorado
21 Wears No. 15 (defense)
23 Colorado head coach
24 Todd Peterson's hometown
27 Former Colorado head coach
28 Joe Ganz's home state
29 2001 All-America quarterback

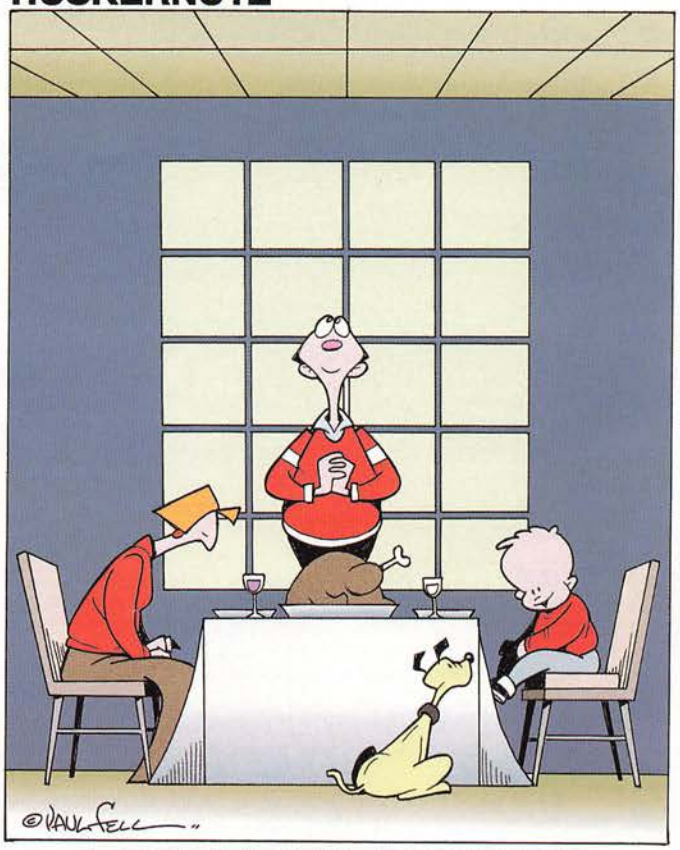
DOWN

1 Ex-Husker with Houston Texans
2 Scored 3 TDs vs. Kansas
3 1983 Lombardi Award winner
5 Bo Pelini's current school
6 Colorado field name
8 Wears No. 90
9 Leading rusher vs. Kansas
10 Colorado color
11 Network for NU-Colorado game
13 Colorado nickname
16 2003 All-America punter
18 Ex-Husker with Green Bay Packers
19 1994 Outland Trophy winner
22 Ex-Husker with New England Patriots
25 Wears No. 15 (offense)
26 NU's 2003 bowl game

Answers in December issue



HUSKERNUTZ



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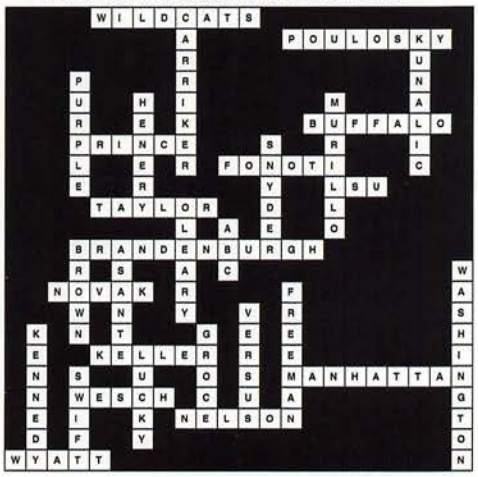
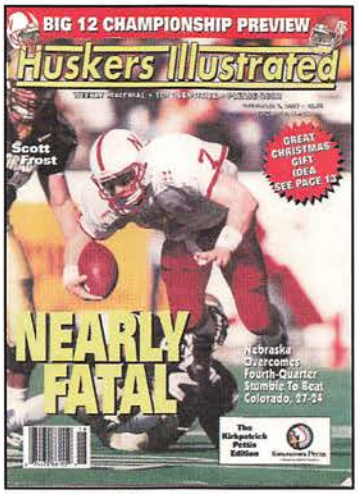


10 Years Ago . . .

Huskers Illustrated looks back at some of the top stories of 1997

Dec. 6, 1997: Volume 17, No. 18



MIRACLE MAN

Matt Davison could never do another thing at Nebraska — perish the thought — and he would always be remembered as the player who made a rub-your-eyes-and-look-again catch for the ages.

BOARD TO TEARS

Not even the potential of popping his shoulder out of its socket can keep Andy Markowski from playing relentless basketball and chasing loose balls.

HUSKERS REMAIN UNBEATEN WITH 27-24 WIN IN BOULDER

For the fourth regular season in the last five, Nebraska was perfect.

The Cornhuskers will take an 11-0 record and No. 2 national ranking into the Big 12 championship game against Texas A&M at the Alamodome in San Antonio, Texas, on Saturday.

It can't get much better than that. But Aaron Taylor wasn't smiling.

Victory No. 11 was by only three points against Colorado.

"You can't be satisfied when you win 27-24," Taylor said.

Not when you take a 27-10 lead into the fourth quarter, you can't be. Not when you're trying to make up ground on No. 1-ranked Michigan in the Associated Press and USA Today/ESPN polls.

"It's a situation where we needed to step up at certain times in the game," said the senior guard and co-captain. "Offensively and defensively, we didn't do it. So that's where it's disappointing.

"It's a negative that we didn't go out and play well, but it's also a positive that we know we haven't peaked yet. So there's a little satisfaction there, knowing that we can do better and still win ballgames."

The Cornhuskers could have done considerably better against Colorado, which saw its season come to a 5-6 conclusion at Folsom Field on a pleasant afternoon the day after Thanksgiving.

Though not particularly impressive, Nebraska had the game under control as the fourth quarter wound down. The 17-point lead was sufficiently comfortable, and the Cornhuskers seemed to be driving to another touchdown, just to make sure. They were second-and-5 at the Colorado 25.

I-back Ahman Green ran off right tackle for 2 yards but fumbled. Colorado strong safety Ryan Black recovered at the Buffaloes' 23-yard line. The game's metamorphosis was dramatic.

"We got in the soup in a hurry," said Cornhusker coach Tom Osborne.

On the sixth play after the fumble recovery, John Hessler, Colorado's oft-maligned senior quarterback, threw a 32-yard touchdown pass to wide receiver Marcus Stiggers. Jeremy Aldrich kicked the extra point and the plot — or soup — thickened. With 3:16 remaining, the score was 27-17.

The Buffaloes recovered an onside kid by Aldrich at their 45-yard line . . . ■

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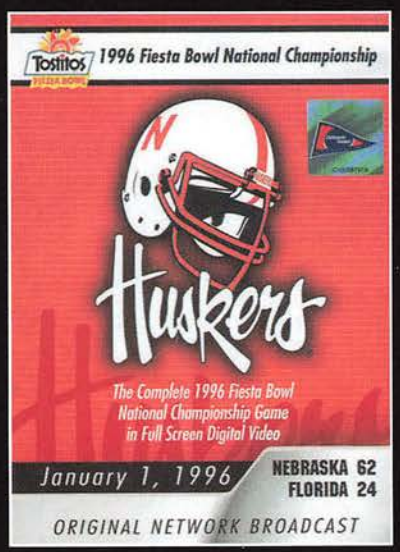

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'Just Instinct'

After five years on the scout team, defensive end Rice knew what to do

Mike BABCOCK

HE HAD HEARD the words before: "Be ready; you might play this week." And he had gotten ready

His hopes would soar. At last he was going to get in a game. Then he wouldn't play.

He would watch from the sideline, as he always did during home games — walk-on scout team players don't travel. And he would be crushed when the games were over. The word "crushed" is his.

Eventually, he wouldn't allow himself to get excited. He knew he wasn't going to play. When you're a fifth-year senior and you've never played a down, you become resigned to the fact that you won't.

Thomas Rice is that fifth-year senior. And he had never played a down until the Kansas State game.

The coaches told him they would try to get him in, regardless of how things unfolded. The game was the last at home for Rice and 28 other seniors. And the coaches planned to use every one who was healthy.

In this case, Rice's defense mechanism hadn't kicked in. He allowed himself to be excited, at last.

"I knew they would do their best to get all the seniors in," he said.

Thomas Rice saw the first action of his career on Senior Day.

Nevertheless, he didn't expect to get in as early as he did. "I was shocked," he said. Late in the first quarter, defensive line coach Buddy Wyatt told him: "Hey, you've got the next series."

Nebraska had just scored to take a 14-10 lead. Kansas State started at its 16-yard line, first-and-10, with 26 seconds remaining in the quarter. Rice, No. 85, was on the field, lining up at right defensive end.

The first play was uneventful, though Rice had what appeared to be an unimpeded path to quarterback Josh Freeman when an official's whistle stopped the play. The Wildcats were penalized for a false start.

On the second play, running back James Johnson broke through the middle of the defense for 17 yards and a first down. The quarter ended. The teams changed ends of the field.

Rice was still at right defensive end after the change. But before Kansas State came to the line of scrimmage for the first play of the second quarter, he was replaced by Barry Turner.

He wasn't finished, however. The next time the Wildcats got the ball, he was back on the field. And on second-and-10 from the Kansas State 28-yard line, the play came his way.

Nebraska ran a blitz, "fire zone." And his responsibility was to drop in coverage. "Honestly, before this year, I had never dropped in coverage, even in practice very much," Rice said.

A couple of weeks ago, practicing on the scout team, he had dropped in coverage on redshirted freshman tight end Mike McNeill. "I thought I was playing good coverage," said Rice. "No, I wasn't."

McNeill caught a pass, and "I realized, 'I've got to play a little tighter.' "

He learned from the experience. When Freeman countered the blitz by dumping a pass to Jeron Mastrud, Rice was in position to tackle the 6-foot-6, 259-pound tight end.

He brought down Mastrud along the Nebraska sideline, after a 1-yard gain.

"It was kind of a blur," he said. "I just remember dropping back and seeing the quarterback looking our way. All of a sudden he (Mastrud) caught it and you've got to do what you're here to do, go make a tackle. It's what we're trained to do. That's what the coaches always talk about. 'We need to have guys who can go in and not be worried about guys not doing their jobs.' It was a no-brainer, just instinct."

After five years on the scout team, he knew what to do.

"It was definitely a rush, a great feeling. After the play got over, I didn't even know what I did. I probably looked goofy, jumping around," he said. "It was a great feeling to record a stat."

He neither looked goofy nor jumped around. He raised both arms in the air as he looked at his teammates on the sideline. Kevin Luhrs hugged him, and Josh Mueller came over to congratulate him.

Rice would get to play again late in the game. In all, he would get six snaps, he said.

"I'm glad I got in when the game was still on the line because it was a completely different feeling from the first quarter to when I got in again," said Rice. "It was such a great feeling to be out there with my teammates, guys I've worked with for five years. It was a really great experience."

Even if he hadn't made the tackle, even if he hadn't gotten in the game, "I'd do it all over again," he said. "It's not about how many plays you make. It's about being part of this program, being a part of all the people who have come before you. That's what's important to me, being a part of this program.

"So it would have been worth it without playing." ■

***Mike Babcock** is a former sports columnist for the Lincoln Journal Star. He has covered Nebraska football for nearly 30 years. Mike can be reached at MBABCOCK1@neb.rr.com or P.O. Box 6782, Lincoln, NE 68506.*

Senior defensive end Thomas Rice (85) celebrates after stopping Kansas State tight end Jerome Mastrud (85) for a 1-yard gain in the second quarter. Rice saw the first playing time of his NU career on Senior Day. (Photo by Scott Bruhn)

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Tom Osborne as the new interim Athletic Director

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